

50 Pence



Christmas 2018

The Trident



Do join us at our
Christmas Services
(see pages 8—9)

The Parish Magazine of


ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE

BOSTON ROAD, HANWELL, W7 2AD

Serving Hanwell and Beyond

Registered Charity no: 1130519

www.thomashanwell.org.uk



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE
 BOSTON ROAD, HANWELL
 CHURCH OF ENGLAND

WE DO HOPE THAT YOU WILL FEEL WELCOME TO COME TO OUR SERVICES

SUNDAY

- 8.00 AM SAID EUCHARIST (BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER SERVICE)
- 10.00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL (TERM TIME & NOT 2ND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH)
- 10.00 AM PARISH EUCHARIST
- 6.30 PM EVENING PRAYER (BCP)
- CHORAL EVENSONG FOR SPECIAL FESTIVALS (PLEASE SEE NOTICEBOARD FOR DETAILS)

WEEKDAY CELEBRATIONS OF HOLY COMMUNION

- TUESDAY 12 NOON
- WEDNESDAY 2PM

MORNING PRAYER

7.30 AM MONDAY TO FRIDAY (8.00 A.M SATURDAY)

EVENING PRAYER

DAILY 5.00 PM (EXCEPT SATURDAY AND SUNDAY)

PEOPLE OF ALL FAITHS, OR NO FAITH AT ALL, ARE WELCOME AT ANY OF OUR SERVICES. THOSE WHO ARE FULL MEMBERS OF THEIR OWN CHRISTIAN CONGREGATIONS ARE WELCOME TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION IN ST. THOMAS'.

REGULAR MEETINGS

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| MONDAY | 12.30 PM | HANWELL HOMELESS CONCERN |
| | 4.45 PM | RAINBOW GUIDES |
| | 6.00 PM | BROWNIES |
| TUESDAY | 5.30 PM | BEAVERS |
| | 6.30 PM | CUBS |
| WEDNESDAY | | |
| | 10.30AM | MOTHER AND BABY/TODDLER GROUP |
| THURSDAY | 7.00 PM | GUIDES |
| FRIDAY | 10.30 - 12 NOON | 'POP-IN' |
| | 7.00 PM | SCOUTS (AT 'THE WARREN' TRUMPERS WAY) |
| | 7.00 PM | CHOIR |

FOR MORE INFORMATION LOG ONTO OUR WEBSITE:
WWW.THOMASHANWELL.ORG.UK

PLEASE E-MAIL US AT st.thomas.office@btinternet.com



From our Vicar

Dear Friends

2018 was another tumultuous year in the life of this island. The impact of Brexit with all its concomitant results is being played out on a daily basis. Amidst the noise of political battle it is very hard to make sense of what is, and more importantly, what will happen. The battle-cries of “hard”, “soft”, “another referendum”, “Canada”, “Switzerland”, “Norway” and so on and so on, are rehearsed constantly on television and radio. In amongst all this ‘battle-noise’, this year marked the centenary of another, far more costly war, the end of the First World War. Some incredibly creative things have been done to ensure that this event is **not forgotten as it now falls outside of everyone’s living memory. In such cases the power of symbols and slogans come to the fore, be they poppies or “lest we forget”. These simple actions try to recall and help make sense** of the senseless, and follow a pattern forged by the experience of people throughout history.

My father’s family are all from Scotland, although my very *Middle-English* (in the linguistic/historical not Mondeo-man sense) coming from *ceapmann* meaning, one who barter, trades etc hardly reveals that. Two of my brothers, who are much more interested in this *Who do you think you are* sort of thing, tell me there is a logical explanation for all this. Basically my surname was one of the surnames adopted by a rather unattractive group of people who, because of their stealing and murdering as bouncers usually for **the Clan Lennox, or quite frankly, anyone who’d pay, were declared illegal in 1624.** Hence, the fall of the clan MacFarlane resulted in the adoption of **various surnames. However, Wikipedia, does not help my brothers’ theory/argument as Chapman is not listed amongst the clan’s ‘associated names’, so who knows? What is mentioned though, is the clan’s war-cry, “Loch Slòigh”,** which was screamed at every battle by, according to pictures, very angry ginger men be-decked in tartan. This war-cry was meant to strike fear into the heart of the opponent, and again, has echoes running through history.

The Israelites, as they went into battle, shouted “Immanuel!” a word familiar to us all at this time of year. That war-cry was meant to strike fear into the heart of their opponents too, because it means, **‘God is with us’.** Thus, by implication, God was not with the enemies of Israel. In the midst of battle and its accompanying horrors, there was a desire to place God in the midst. The motives may be critiqued, but the guttural instinct is universal. In the political turmoil of first century Palestine, Immanuel was truly placed **in the midst, as Jesus was born. “Immanuel” was no longer a verbal ‘symbol’**

encapsulating the instinctive desire of a nation, but a physical reality in a manger. As shepherds and kings adored they looked in the face of Immanuel; God *is* with us.

Christmas reminds us that in amongst the noise, be it joyous or fractious, God is with us. Christmas tells us that God does not take a vacation from the world, but rather enters it as it is.

Whatever life is like for you at the moment, be it joyous or fractious, **surrounded by a loving clan or Brexit concerns, remember, 'Immanuel'**. God has promised to be with us, through thick and thin, not simply to anoint the good and magic away the bad, but make sense and offer hope wherever we are.

May you, this Christmas, know Immanuel; God with us.

Your friend and priest

Fr. Robert



Parish News

The 2019 Panto *Cinderella* is now well under way, and we are **very excited by the talent we have for this year's production.**

The Panto is a wonderful parish event which involves dozens of **people in the St Thomas' family and beyond. In this month's Trident are** details of how to get your tickets.

In 2018 we launched our cinema club, *Pictures by the Park*, and this has been a great success. In November we had a Remembrance double-bill showing *The Darkest Hour* and *Dunkirk*. The takings on the door meant that in this centenary year £190 went to the Royal British Legion. This, along with the £400 raised for the British Red Cross towards the floods in Indonesia and the Philippines at our Caribbean and International Night which showed *Hidden Figures*, means that many people are benefitting from this venture.

In October we had a free organ recital which was well attended, and we were offered a musical and intellectual feast. Do keep an eye out for these occasional events.

The musical life of St Thomas' is an important part of our life together. If you would like to be a part of it please look at the piece in this Trident in connection to the choir.

Our Christmas Fair this year is on 24th November from 2-4pm. Do come along and grab yourself a Christmas bargain.

If you are able please join us for one of our Christmas Services which, in their different ways, capture all that is good in this season.

Our Church and what it's all about..

Its been quite a few years since St Thomas' Church decided to do this special Christmas edition of our Parish Magazine and give a copy to every house in our parish. Many of you are 'regulars' at St Thomas' and we hope you realise how grateful we are for your commitment and support. We have got to know some of you over the last few years, when you have entered our Christmas Quiz and we've been delighted when you decided to subscribe to our magazine. Some of you may be reading this for the first time, and we really hope we'll be able to welcome you at some of our Christmas services.

We would like to take this opportunity give you an overview of what **St Thomas' offers to the community of Hanwell. It may surprise you!**

St Thomas' is not just there for worship, although that is a fundamental part of life at the church and we welcome people of all faiths or no faith at all. The same goes for our youth groups. For the children and young people we offer Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts, and you can enquire further about these groups by contacting the relevant leader. All email addresses and phone numbers are listed on the back cover of this magazine. All our youth group leaders give of their time freely and their commitment is an example to us all.

We've got a great choir - of mixed ability! - however we all enjoy singing. **We lead the worship on a Sunday and at other special services. We're** looking for new recruits, so if you enjoy singing, please contact Ed, our Director of Music for more info (also see opposite).

We run various fund-raising events throughout the year including our very popular Quiz Supper, which we hold during November and our Panto in January which is one of our highlights and great entertainment for young and old alike. Please do buy your tickets soon as they are selling fast! (Box office 07850 889948 or email stickets@me.com).

We host regular film nights and we hold a fun run/walk around Elthorne Park and the playing fields in April, which is always popular.

We welcome all children at our Sunday School and our church hall is used for all sorts of groups locally and can be rented for parties.

Our Church is always open for quiet prayer and reflection and is always there for weddings, christenings and funerals.

That covers just some of the things that go on at St Thomas'. All forthcoming services and events are advertised in our monthly magazine and we advertise most of them on banners above the church hall, so have a look when you're passing.

May we wish you a happy and blessed Christmas and a prosperous 2019.



Fancy a Song?

Did you know that St Thomas' has a choir? We make a pretty good sound! But we're small - a little too small really and we'd love you to come and join us. We

rehearse on Friday evenings from 7-8 and we sing in church at the parish Eucharist service on Sundays at 10am. Too much of a commitment I hear you say. I might not make every Friday or every Sunday. No problem, we **all miss from time to time. I can't read music you protest - that doesn't matter. So what's to like? Well we work hard at choir practice but we also** have a bit of a laugh. No one tells you off if you get a note wrong and we **get to sing some great music. I'm in the choir - I'm not one of the better singers but I love being a part of it. If you'd like to know more, please give** me (or Ed, our Director of Music) a call or send an email.

No obligation I promise.

Sue C. (email/phone number on the back page of the magazine)



From the Editors

The year seems to go by so fast and here we are once again, approaching Advent and Christmas. We have some lovely **services at St Thomas' to celebrate the season and we'd love** you to join us - **they're listed on pages 8 and 9. We also** have our Panto in early January, so please book your tickets soon.
Happy Christmas from Jill, Sue and all of us at St Thomas'

Jill + Sue

Copy date for the January Trident will be Sunday December 9th
Copy date for the February Trident will be Sunday January 13th

The opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Church, the Vicar, the Editors or of the PCC. The editors reserve the right to edit items sent in for publication.

ERRATUM — In November's magazine, we published an article called 'Just One of Many' about Henry William Brooks. Henry's great nephew Nigel Brooks wrote this for us, but we omitted to credit him. The editors would like to apologize for this.

SPECIAL SERVICES FOR CHRISTMAS AT ST THOMAS'



Advent Sunday

10am on Sunday 2nd December

This is our first special service in the build up to Christmas. The ceremony and music is inspired by the plainchant liturgy of the earliest church. All the Sunday morning services during Advent incorporate the lighting of the Advent Wreath by one of the children and reflect on the rich themes of the Advent season, traditionally called the Great Os (come and find out why!).

Christingle

4pm on Sunday 16th December

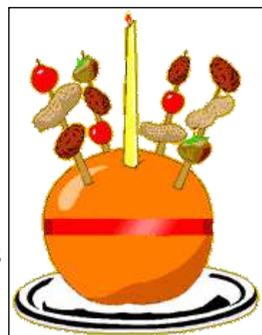
One event not to be missed is our Christingle service – a candle-lit family celebration that raises money for the work of The Children's Society, a voluntary organisation of the Church of England.

If you haven't been to one of our Christingle Services before, a brief explanation may help! The 'Christingle' itself, which symbolises the light of Christ's love, is a lighted candle mounted in an orange, which has a red ribbon or tape around it. Also mounted in the orange are four cocktail sticks, each bearing dried fruit or sweets.

The orange represents the world. The candle stands for Jesus, the Light of the World. The red ribbon or tape symbolises the blood of Christ, who shares in the suffering of the whole world. The **fruits and sweets are symbolic of God's Creation and His love for us.**

The highlight of our service is when the Christingles are lit. We then dim the lights in the Church and **everyone sings the carol 'Away in a Manger'. It's lovely to see the children's excited faces illuminated**

by the Christingles. This service is a great way to remind the children about the true meaning of Christmas. Refreshments will be served in the Church Hall after the service.



Carols by Candlelight

6.30pm on Sunday 23rd December

Candlelight, Carols and Choir - these are the ingredients that go to make our service of Nine Lessons and Carols so special. This is your chance to renew your acquaintance with the best of the traditional Christmas Carols, to hear some old favourites sung by the Choir and, we hope, to discover some new ones. Come and raise the roof, then enjoy a glass of mulled wine and some mince pies. Christmas really starts here.

Christmas Eve Children's Service

5.00pm on Christmas Eve



This service is very much one for the children. It is an informal service with no choir or organ. The Sunday School perform a short play based on the nativity and then we sing some carols and say our prayers. Some of the figures are placed in the crib at the back of the church. It is a delightful service and with all the eager anticipation of Santa Claus, it is a great way to remind

the children of what Christmas is celebrating.

Midnight Mass

11.30pm on Christmas Eve

Midnight Mass has its roots in the very earliest of times when Christians on this most holy night met to celebrate the first Eucharist of Christmas. It is both beautiful and joyous; a time to pause, reflect, and give thanks with **candlelight, processions, traditional rituals, and the 'sweet singing of the choir'**. **The service also includes the Christ-child** being placed in the crib which is blessed during the service.

Christmas Day Family Communion

10am on Christmas day



This service is one for all the family, so bring your children, friends and relatives. When you enter the Church you will find the Christmas tree beautifully decorated. We sing hymns and carols and we have a short sermon - very much aimed at the children on this special day.



CHRISTMAS QUIZ 2018!

This year our quiz is on similar lines to last year's, and we hope just as enjoyable. Every answer contains a COLOUR—it's as simple as that! For example Q: The largest living animal (4,5) A: A blue whale.

We hope you have some fun with it! If you'd like to send us your answers, then please get them to us by January 13th. No prizes, but you'll get a mention in our February magazine.

1. She ate the breakfast of the whole of a four-footed family (10)
2. **This young animal's mother sounds to be very expensive (4)**
3. Arguably the best snooker player who has never been world champion (5,5)
4. The Royal Horse Guards especially when they play for Birmingham City! (3,5)
5. Inspector Clouseau was filmed at his best in this (4,7)
6. The singing creepy-crawlies claim to have lived in one of these (6,9)
7. Vertically challenged characters took her in (4,5)
8. Are these naughty films all in one colour? (4,6)
9. This Argentine fruit is found all mixed up! (9)
10. Cody of the Wild West (7,4)
11. **Gainsborough's little lad (3,4,3)**
12. **One of Lord Tweedsmuir's fast moving adventures (11)**
13. **A large dark stretch of water on the edge of Europe (5,3)**
14. and a much smaller one closer to home! (9)
15. A new hue comes into view as you move round either pool (10)
16. **Apart from the colour, this bird thinks it's a dog! (6,7)**
17. **When you are in this you (probably) don't want to be seen! (3,4)**
18. His elegy is very British, but his surname has an American spelling (6,4)
19. A group to be reckoned with when an oval ball is used (3,6)
20. Whatever the weather, this is visible in a distant view (3)
21. **This Russian sailor doesn't sail, he flies! (3,7)**
22. Leave stranded, perhaps with just a warning signal (6)
23. Does a colic hen get confused and lay eggs looking like this? (9)
24. Millions have heard Bing sing this seasonal song (5,9)
25. Ask him to tea and he might bring his own with him! (4,4)
26. Here you would often find one I made earlier! (4,5)
27. Is this fruity film just a wind-up? (1,9,6)
28. **An American flower with its own ballad(3,6,4,2,5)**
29. and a European flow-er found in several countries (4,6)
30. **She obviously didn't wear a black hat when on her horse! (6,3,6,4)**
31. You can go round here as fast as you like (11)
32. These help when gardening & when gardening you can get these (5,7)
33. Can be found in one – or in heraldry (4)

34. Anne is all mixed up after being set alight! (5,6)
35. If you are well clued – **oh you'll know this spinster! (4,7)**
36. She might come down from heaven to assist with a fire (5,7)
37. The flower which sounds like those who get wed for the money! (8)
38. The messenger god by its other elementary name (11)
39. Did a drake get a ducking going round the world in this? (6,4)
40. The author who wrote about fellow no.3 (6,6)
41. **Alison Uttley's four-legged friend (6,4,6)**
42. London ball boys might hope to earn their spurs here (5,4,4)
43. It sounds to be needed for the family transport! (5)
44. Up in the Outer Isles, it can be seen floating in Loch Resort (5)
45. This elusive fellow was sought for here and there and everywhere (7,9)
46. Mystical when it works – and tasty too! (5,5)
47. They are not as dangerous as they sound when they shoot past (3,3,6)
48. A vegetarian sounding butterfly (7,5)
49. A special occasion when the pillar box is covered in wet paint! (3,6,3)
50. Years of (hopefully) married bliss are celebrated here (6,7)
51. Traditionally composed (or even worn?) by Henry VIII (12)
52. This Scot founded a famous U.S. detective agency (5,9)
53. **This won't help you solve it! (3,7)**
54. **Chesterton's priestly detective (6,5)**
55. **Was this 1940's scandalous novel (and film) all about faulty traffic lights? (7,5)**
56. **She was just William's playmate, but she sure could scream! (6,9,4)**
57. The introducer of a daily story of country folk (7,5)
58. Nickname of Lord Lonsdale who founded the A.A (6,4)
59. Do you twig this emblem of peace? (5,6)
60. **Priestley's travels brought all these together! (7,4,1,7)**
61. Jake and Elwood (3,5,8)
62. A troublesome possession? (5,8)
63. A lovable loser! (7,5)
64. **Tom Sturridge and Jude Law's ex (6,6)**
65. The Godfather of Soul (5,5)
66. Young sprats (9)
67. A golden girl! (5,5)
68. One of the few entertainers to have won an Academy Award, a Grammy, an Emmy and a Tony Award (6,8)
69. A man who needed a governess (11,7)
70. The King of Chutzpah (4,7)
71. One-time US ambassador to Ghana and Czechoslovakia (7,6,5)
72. Quite a cool star! (3,5)
73. Dating star changes colour (5,5)
74. Cambridge art graduate turned model turned actor (5,8)
75. Aggressive delivery driver? (5,3,3)



Brownies' visit to Pax Lodge

WAGGGS is the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

WAGGGS is the international organisation to which GirlGuiding in the UK and all other Girlguiding organisations in over 150 countries belong.

WAGGGS supports girls and young women to develop their full potential as leaders and active citizens of the world.

WAGGGS helps young people to volunteer and to strengthen their motivation, commitment and sense of identity, develop core competencies in leadership, decision-making and other life skills, and gain intercultural and intergenerational understanding.

WAGGGS runs 5 centres around the world where Girlguiding members can visit and stay. These centres offer training and resources to member organisations and provide opportunities for members to volunteer in their communities. These centres are in Switzerland, Mexico, India, Africa and London.

We are lucky to have one of these centres so close to home. The London Centre is called Pax Lodge and that is where the Brownies (and a few Guides) went for a day out. We were welcomed there by Girlguiding volunteers from Australia, Canada and Ireland. They took us on a tour of the centre and organised a lot of international type games and activities some of which were from their own culture. We had taken a packed lunch and in the afternoon we had some more fun activities. We did painting, craft, dancing and games from around the world. The afternoon ended with a ceremony outside the building around the flagpole. Here we were all given a badge pin which can only be worn by people who have visited Pax Lodge.

The whole day out had taught the Brownies about the international aspect of Girlguiding and they now realise that they are part of the largest organisation uniquely for girls and women in the world.

Q: Who hides in the bakery at Christmas?

A: A mince spy!

Christmas or X-mas?



The word Christmas comes from Christ-Mass, the Church service that celebrated the birth of Jesus. Christmas is sometimes written as Xmas. Some people don't think it's correct to call Christmas 'Xmas' as that takes the 'Christ' (Jesus) out of Christmas.

But that is not quite right! In the Greek language and alphabet, the letter that looks like an X is the Greek letter chi / **Χ** (pronounced 'kye' - it rhymes with 'eye') which is the first letter of the Greek word for Christ, Christos.

The early church used the first two letters of Christos in the Greek alphabet 'chi' and 'rho' to create a monogram (symbol) to represent the name of Jesus. This looks like an X with a small p on the top: **Ϟ**

The symbol of a fish is sometimes used by Christians: for example you might see a fish sticker on a car or someone wearing a little fish badge. This comes from the time when the first Christians had to meet in secret, as the Romans wanted to kill them. Jesus had said that he wanted to make his followers 'Fishers of Men', so people started to use the fish symbol.

When two Christians met, one person drew half a basic fish shape (often using their foot in the dust on the ground) and the other person drew the other half of the fish. The Greek word for fish is 'Ikthus' or 'Ichthys'. There are five Greek letters in the word. It can also make up a sentence of Christian beliefs 'Ie-sous Christos Theou Huios So-te-r' which in English means "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour". The second letter of these five letter is X or Christos!

So Xmas can also mean Christmas; but it should also be pronounced 'Christmas' rather than 'ex-mas'!



You'll find both these symbols in St Thomas' Church. Can you find them?

Q: How is the alphabet different on Christmas than any other day?
A: On Christmas, it has Noel.

Q: "Why didn't Rudolph get a good report card?"
A: "Because he went down in History."

Q: Why does Santa have elves in his workshop?
A: Because the Seven Dwarfs were busy!



Terracycle recycling for Organ Fund

The collection programmes are going well. We have now raised £1700 to help with the upkeep of the church organ.

We are now collecting so many Tassimo pods and bags that we have had a large crate delivered to the church hall. Please keep saving them and leaving the bags in the church or the church hall.

We collect Ella's Kitchen baby food pouches - we can also accept similar sorts of pouches such as those some yoghurts and drinks come in. These need to be emptied and rinsed out as they sit in my garage for a few weeks before we collect enough to send off.

As well as collecting sweet biscuit wrappers we can now collect cream cracker wrappers and cake wrappers that come in a similar sort of plastic, but please no crisp packets or pop corn bags.

Please ensure there is no rubbish in your donations.

Thank you.

Pauline

To find out more, please go to www.terracycle.co.uk



The Tradition of the Christmas Pudding

Christmas (or Plum) Pudding is the traditional end to the British Christmas dinner. But what we think of as Christmas Pudding, is not what it was originally like!

Christmas pudding originated as a 14th century porridge called 'frumenty' that was made of beef and mutton with raisins, currants, prunes, wines and spices. This would often be more like soup and was eaten as a fasting meal in preparation for the Christmas festivities.

By 1595, frumenty was slowly changing into a plum pudding, having been thickened with eggs, breadcrumbs, dried fruit and given more flavor with the addition of beer and spirits. It became the customary Christmas dessert around 1650, but in 1664 the Puritans banned it as a bad custom.

In 1714, King George I re-established it as part of the Christmas meal, having tasted and enjoyed Plum Pudding. By Victorian times, Christmas Puddings had changed into something similar to the ones that are eaten today.

Village Christmas

Christmas today often falls far ahead of its time, with signs in the shops appearing soon after the summer holidays. But in my childhood, Christmas began at the proper season, only just before the Feast itself.

For us boys in our village in the Cotswolds, it always started on a star-bright night, never prearranged but intuitively recognised. A few of us would wrap ourselves in scarves and mufflers, fix lighted candles in jam jars and go through the streets calling out the rest of the gang. 'Comin' carol-barking, then?' It was a declaration, not a question. One by one they appeared, flapping their arms and stamping their feet.

We were a ragged lot but we had official status, for we were the boys of the village choir, and as a reward for a year of dutiful churchgoing, we'd earned the right to sing carols at all the big houses in the valley, and collect our tribute.

Now our band of musical footpads set off merrily through the crunching snow, swinging out lanterns on loops of string. We began with the Squire, while still in good voice - advancing in awe down his well-swept drive to the great house. The old man, wrapped in a rug, stood at the door and listened, weeping softly as our Christmas trebles reminded him once more of the passing of time.

After the regal visit, we hurried onward up the valley, calling at the houses of lesser gentry. Beneath frosted windows, in echoing stable yards, under great Gothic porches and in tapestried hallways we sang, eight voices, clear and sweet, ringing out through the 'Hark, the herald angels sing!' Once again we were the bearers of the miraculous tidings to house and farm, to the folk by the fire, the stamping beasts in their stalls. And at each house, when we'd finished, we were rewarded with handfuls of coppers, hot mince pies, tangerines - gifts as precious as gold or myrrh....

Laurie Lee

Q: What's blue, 'V' shaped and flies?
A: The Red Arrows in disguise!

Q: What sweets do frogs like?
A: Lolly-hops!



Brownie Post

The Brownies will be running a Christmas postal service as a way of helping people of the parish this Christmas. The post box will be in the Church from Advent Sunday, 2nd December, until Monday 17th December. There is no charge for this service and we are able to deliver to some streets outside our Parish. We include Midhurst Road but not roads to the other side of Midhurst Road (Salisbury Road, Mayfield Avenue etc). We deliver to Townholm Crescent, Humes Avenue, Studley Grange Road etc up to and including Green Lane and we deliver up to Oaklands Road, but not to Deans Road. PLEASE, PLEASE - PUT ADDRESSES ON THE ENVELOPES, even if the addressee is well known in the parish and you think that Brown Owl will know where they live. Last year a lot of envelopes just had a **name on and couldn't be delivered. The Brownies do a wonderful job with hundreds of cards to deliver, so please help them all you can.**

The 3 Wise Men?

We think of the 3 wise men following the star and visiting Jesus in the stable, but according to the Church of England General Synod, there **weren't necessarily 3 of them, they were not necessarily wise, and they weren't necessarily men!**

At the week long General Synod in London in 2004, a subcommittee led by the Bishop of Sheffield, the Rt Rev Jack Nicholls, was revising the short **prayers or "collects" of the Book of Common Worship. They had been urged to change the term Magi, which is used in the Book of Common Worship, to Three Wise Men, on the grounds that this is how people usually refer to them. However, Rev Nicholls said that "to translate the term into something more universally understood is to miss the point being made." Matthew deliberately used an exotic word, Magi, in his Gospel, to emphasise the exotic nature of the visitors to Jesus. 'Magi' is a translation of the name of officials at the Persian court. It is a word which discloses nothing about the number, wisdom or gender embodied in the term. The Persians were unlikely to have been women, but the possibility can't be excluded.**

That Jesus' visitors brought 3 gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh, is theologically undisputed, and the fact that there were 3 gifts probably led to the jump to conclude that there were 3 men as well.

Holly, Ivy and Christmas Plants

Holly, Ivy and other greenery such as Mistletoe were originally used in pre-Christian times to help celebrate the Winter Solstice Festival and ward off evil spirits and to celebrate new growth.

When Christianity came into Western Europe, some people wanted to keep the greenery, to give it Christian meanings but also to ban the use of it to decorate homes. The UK and Germany were the main countries to keep the use of the greenery as decorations. Here are the Christian meanings:

Holly

The prickly leaves represent the crown of thorns that Jesus wore when he was crucified. The berries are the drops of blood that were shed by Jesus because of the thorns.

In Scandinavia it is known as the Christ Thorn.

In pagan times, Holly was thought to be a male plant and Ivy a female plant. An old English tradition from the Midlands says that whichever one was brought into the house first over winter, tells you whether the man or woman of the house would rule that year! But it was unlucky to bring either into a house before Christmas Eve.

Ivy

Ivy has to cling to something to support itself as it grows. This reminds us that we need to cling to God for support in our lives.

In Germany, it is traditional that ivy is only used outside and a piece tied to the outside of a Church was supposed to protect it from lightning!

Laurel

Laurel has been worn as a wreath on the head to symbolise success and victory for thousands of years.

It symbolises the victory of God over the devil.

Fir & Yew Trees

Fir and Yew trees are evergreen and so signify everlasting life with God.

Fir is also very commonly used for Christmas trees.

Embroidery Exhibition – Gunnersbury Park Museum

Fabric of Faith

In 2016 a group of ladies from St Thomas' got involved in an embroidery project through Suburban Faith. Meeting with women of different faith communities from West London we held weekly embroidery workshops focusing on belief, belonging, migration and change. Artist Katy Beinart, Claire Dwyer and novelist/poet Nazneen Ahmed organised the workshops **that took place in St. Thomas' Hall, and among us we shared experiences, ideas, faith, cooking and made good friends.**

Some weeks ago we received an invitation for this exhibition on the 18th October at Gunnersbury Park Museum, Popes Lane W5. We met up for the opening to see our embroidery installation which was produced by Katy in collaboration with Claire and Nazneen.

It was wonderful meeting again with Katy and Nazneen.

Some textile artworks were arranged and displayed differently from the previous venues - in May this year at Tate Modern, and last year in April **at St. Thomas' Church. Now, in the room at Gunnersbury museum, the embroidery pieces together with the poems and the installations capture a different atmosphere.** The projected lighting highlights the colours of the fabric threads, making them look more vibrant, more prominent and making the embroidery work connected with the poems tell a more interesting story.

Apart from the embroidery handiwork of the participants from all the different faiths, Laura Cuch Grases, photographer and researcher of the project, provided and displayed profiles of participants holding their pieces of embroidery. Laura also provided the electronic screen showing images of the participants sewing together as the workshops were in progress. This reflected the enthusiasm, experience, unity of enjoyment, camaraderie and expression in the project.

St. Thomas' church kneelers that were embroidered in the 1970s are also included in the exhibition.

After viewing the embroidery exhibition, we went into the beautiful Gunnersbury House ballroom for drinks, appetizing sandwiches and cakes. Katy gave a speech about the skills, ideas and work that had gone into the handiwork and also putting together this exhibition. Nazneen read out her poems reflecting in-depth interviews with the participants about their life stories. A few participants shared their experience and involvement in this fruitful project.

The exhibition will continue at Gunnersbury House until 6th January 2019.

We are grateful to David Gilbert for getting us involved and for his coordination and his enthusiasm.

Arda Metcalf



Prayer for the month of December

Lord we all expect so much from the festivities of Christmas.

We always think that other people are having the perfect time with families round the tree.

But there can be so much stress, Lord.

We pray for families who only see each other at Christmas: they may all want to celebrate in quite different ways.

We think about the empty places at tables where loved ones no longer sit.

We pray for new family groups making their own traditions;

For those in the armed forces and others who have to be away from home, or just at work.

Lord, help us all to relax and rejoice in the true meaning of the season. Amen.

A once in a generation exhibition.....

to be seen at the British Library in London (nearest  Kings Cross St Pancras)

The exhibition is entitled Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: Art, Word, War and is on until Tuesday 19 February 2019. It covers 600 years and contains 180 spectacular treasures, including the beautifully illuminated Lindisfarne Gospels as well as the Domesday Book and finds from Sutton Hoo and the Staffordshire Hoard.

A exhibition to remember!!

Hanwell Women's Institute

HANWELL WI has just celebrated its 5th Birthday!

We meet once a month, on the second Wednesday of the month in the **Community Suite at the William Hobbayne Centre** enjoying each other's company and often having a speaker on various topics of general interest. Over the past year we have heard about making and testing knitting patterns, the intricacies of the tube map, and we have made felt brooches and Christmas wreaths, among other things.

Apart from the monthly meetings there is a cinema group who go out on a Monday afternoon once a month and a lunch group (who have eaten their way round Ealing) meets on the third Thursday of the month.

Our community involvement includes collecting much needed food for the Ealing Food Bank and sponsoring a member to run in aid of the London Air Ambulance, who had given us an inspiring talk.

We are a friendly open group so why not come along and join us? You can come along as a guest while you are thinking about joining formally. Hanwell WI is part of the Middlesex Federation of the national WI.

The current programme is on the Facebook page of Hanwell WI and our next meeting is on Wednesday 12th December at 7.30pm when we are making a Christmas decoration under the eye of Judi from the flower shop near the Emporium.

Do come and join us!

Angie Harris
hanwellwi@yahoo.co.uk



St Mary's Players

present

“Aladdin”

Thurs November 29th, Fri November 30th, and Sat December 1st 7.45pm

Matinee on Saturday 1st at 2.45pm

Tickets £10 adults; £7 children/concessions

At: St Mary's Church Hall Greenford Avenue Hanwell W7.

Box office: stmarystickets@hotmail.co.uk or 8840 0085

25th December

Christmas and St Luke's Gospel

It is to St Luke's wonderful gospel that many Christians turn as the year draws to a close and Christmas approaches, for it is to St Luke that we owe the fullest account of the nativity.



Luke alone tells us the story of Mary and the angel's visit to her, and has thus given the Church the wonderful Magnificat of Mary.

Luke alone tells us the story of Simeon's hymn of praise, thus giving us the wonderful Nunc Dimittis. Imagine an Anglican evensong without the Nunc Dimittis.

Luke alone tells us the story of how the angels appeared to the shepherds and how the shepherds then visited the infant Jesus. So – imagine Christmas cards and nativity scenes every year without the shepherds arriving to visit baby Jesus. Imagine school nativity plays without our children dressed as shepherds or sheep. So – thank you, Luke! What makes it so amazing is that Luke was not a Jew! The man who wrote the fullest nativity story, and indeed more of the New Testament than any other single person, was a Gentile!

26th December

Look out for Wenceslas

Most of us probably know that on December 26th (the Feast of Stephen) **'Good king Wenceslas' looked out, writes David Winter. We probably also know that the snow lay round about, 'deep and crisp and even'. Beyond that, he's just someone in a carol that's not often sung nowadays.**

However, Wenceslas was a real person, a duke, and effectively king of Bohemia in the 10th century. In modern terms, he was Czechoslovakian. He was known as a generous and kind monarch, deeply Christian and given to good works. So the story in the carol by the Victorian hymn-writer J.M. Neale, while possibly fictitious, is at least in line with his recognised character. **'Page and monarch' braved the 'bitter weather' and the 'cruel wind's wild lament' to take food and fuel to a poor man living rough.**

Neale's carol was enormously popular in the 19th century, because it perfectly expressed Victorian Christian ideals of benevolence and alms-giving. Christian men of 'wealth and rank' are urged to help the poor, and so 'find blessing'. Ignoring the 'wealth and rank and men' bit, it's still good advice, at Christmas or any other time.

Terracycle recycling for Organ Fund

We are still collecting

Tassimo pods

Biscuit wrappers

Ella's kitchen baby food pouches & lids

Find out more at www.terracycle.co.uk



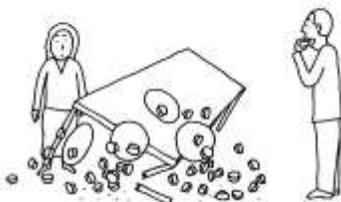
Please continue to give by providing any of these items in one of the green Foodbank collection boxes situated inside the church porches. Thank you

The revised list of items needed:

tinned meat and fish, dried milk, long life sponge puddings, Potatoes (tinned & instant), long life fruit juice & squash, tinned custard and rice pudding, cans of vegetarian chilli and curry, washing up liquid **(small sizes)**. **We've got lots of tea and coffee at the moment.**

PLEASE NOTE - this list is the most recent as we went to press at the beginning of November. Please check the up to date list at <https://ealing.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>

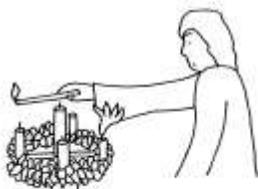
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*MEET YOUR FRIENDS AND MAKE NEW ONES!

DECEMBER

7th - tea, coffee and cakes

14th - tea coffee and cakes

21st - CLOSED

28th - CLOSED

4th Jan & 11th Jan 2019 - CLOSED

The POP-IN is run by the Hanwell Neighbourly Care Scheme.

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NOVEMBER

24th Sat

Christmas Fair 2-4pm



DECEMBER

1st Sat

Churches Together in Hanwell prayers at Our Lady and St Joseph's Church 10-1

2nd Sun

1st Sunday of Advent

9th Sun

2nd Sunday of Advent

16th Sun

3rd Sunday of Advent.

Christingle - 4pm

23rd Sun

4th Sunday of Advent

Nine Lessons and Carols. 6:30pm

24th Mon

Children's Service 5pm

Christmas Eve. Mass at 11.30pm

25th Tues

Christmas Day. Parish Eucharist 10am

30th Sun

1st Sunday of Christmas

JANUARY 2019

5th Sat

Churches Together in Hanwell prayers at N. Hanwell Baptist Church 10-1

10th (Thurs) -12th (Sat)

ST THOMAS'S PANTO!!!!

Baby/Toddler Group

St Thomas' Hall

*On Wednesdays from
10.30am until 11.45am.*

All are welcome.

Free.

*We will be closed on 19th & 26th
Dec & on Wednesday 2nd & 9th Jan*



Happy Christmas from all of us at St Thomas .

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