

WELCOME TO ST THOMAS' GROOMBRIDGE

CHRISTMAS 2025

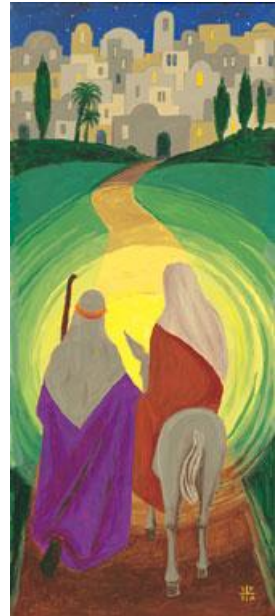




A very warm welcome to the programme for Christmas 2025 here at St Thomas', Groombridge. Whoever you are and whatever tradition you, are welcome in this special place at the heart of our village.

In this booklet you can find out about everything that is happening here over Christmas and into the New Year, along with information about regular services and events and what goes on here at St Thomas' day by day.

St Thomas' belongs to everybody in the village. We are an inclusive rural church, with the doors open every day of the year from around 9 am to around 4 pm so that anyone can come and share in in the beautiful atmosphere. It is a place of great stillness; a place where anyone can come and reflect, contemplate, wonder, say a prayer for a loved one, light a candle.



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ADVENT HERE AT ST THOMAS'

Advent here at St Thomas' will be marked on Sunday mornings with seasonal prayers and preaching and the lighting of the candles on the Advent Wreath each Sunday.

On Tuesdays in Advent at 5 pm there will be an opportunity to worship in stillness as we gather for a time of reflection, prayer and praise. Everyone is warmly welcome to come and celebrate the different themes of this beautiful Season of hope and expectation.

- Tuesday, 2nd December at 5 pm
- Tuesday, 9th December at 5 pm
- Tuesday, 16th December at 5 pm
- Tuesday, 23rd December at 5 pm

Each week of Advent there will also be a mini podcast introducing the main themes of the season. You will be able to find this on the YouTube channel "Fr Nick thinking out loud" (<https://www.youtube.com/@nicholashenshall924>)

TUESDAY MORNING DROP IN:

On Tuesdays in the four weeks running up to Christmas there will be a simple "Drop In" from 9 am. Everyone is warmly welcome to come along for conversation and light refreshments

CHRISTMAS AT ST THOMAS'



Sunday 21st December:

Carols by candlelight

For everyone at 6 pm

CHRISTMAS EVE:

4.00 pm **CRIB SERVICE FOR ALL**

THE FAMILY - come dressed as your favourite character from the Christmas Story as we build the crib.

CHRISTMAS DAY: at 8 am

A simple reflective service of Holy Communion for Christmas morning.

CHRISTMAS DAY at 9.30 am

CHRISTMAS MORNING FOR EVERYONE, with Carols, Christmas Readings & Holy Communion



WHAT'S ON EACH WEEK

Sundays @ 9.30 am: PARISH EUCHARIST - a reflective celebration with hymns, songs, Bible readings and Holy Communion, followed by refreshments

Monthly at 4.30: FAMILIES @4.30 – a lively informal celebration for people of all ages, with contemporary music led by one of our bands, followed by pizza and cake

Mondays @ 09.30 am: TINY FISHES in the Village Hall.

Tuesdays @ 8.50 am MORNING PRAYER in church

Wednesdays@ 6.00 pm: CHOIR PRACTIICE

Thursdays @ 8.50 am MORNING PRAYER in church

Thursdays @ 9.30 am Coffee Cake & Chat in church.

Thursdays @ 4.30 pm Youth Group in the Village Hall

Saturdays @ 8 am Quiet Prayer in Church

St Thomas' also has a range of Home Groups meeting through the week. If you would like to know more, please contact Fr Nicholas.

In seasons like Advent and Lent we also run special study groups focussed on the themes of the season. In the new year we will be re-launching the regular Meditation Group.

OUR CHARITABLE GIVING

Christians have always placed support for those in need at the heart of the ministry of the church. Whether that is a simple donation to a local night shelter, or a radical personal choice to work for peace in a war-torn country, Christians have always been there – working alongside all people of good will to serve others in response both to the teaching of Jesus and to people's need.

Like most churches, St Thomas' has in past years supported global Christian mission through donations to charities involved in Christian work at home and overseas. In 2025 we made a commitment to give away 5% of our unrestricted income. This means that in addition to supporting our regular charities such as Family Support East Sussex and our annual sleep out for Shelter Box, we have been able to support:

THIS YEAR'S BENEFICIARIES:

- Christians Against Poverty
- Red Cross appeal for Ukraine.
- Together in Sussex
- The College of St Barnabas
- St Thomas Primary School PTA in Groombridge
- Myanmar Earthquake Appeal
- UNICEF's work with children in Sudan.

WHAT DO CHRISTIANS BELIEVE?

Christians believe that God came to be with us in a unique way in the person of Jesus Christ. He came at a time of great upheaval in the world inviting people to a better vision and inviting us all, whatever our faith or philosophy, to work together to build a world with compassion and love at its heart, and communities where the needs of each are met and all can flourish together.

In his teaching Jesus placed a special emphasis on serving the poor, the forgotten and the marginalised. That has been at the heart of the work of the church over the last 2,000 years and is why Christians across the world have had such a significant role in healthcare, teaching and combatting the impact of deprivation and poverty, working with all people of goodwill for the common good.

Jesus was only around 30 years old when he died and had only spent three years teaching, preaching, and healing. But Christians believe that through Jesus' death and resurrection, he changed the narrative of what it means to be human, placing faith, hope, and above all love at the heart of our life together. These are the values that lie at the heart of Christianity, even though down the centuries we have not always been brilliant at putting them into practice.

Jesus invites us into a living relationship with him now. Christians put prayer and worship at the heart of life because this is the primary way in which we meet with God and are formed in the joy, simplicity, and mercy that Jesus showed us and shared with us.

INTO THE NEW YEAR AT ST THOMAS'



CHRISTINGLE

Sunday, 1st February at

4.30 pm *A beautiful candle lit service for people of all ages*



**Sunday, 8th
February @ 3 pm
The Snow Drop
Service 2026**

*A time to remember and give thanks
for all those we have lost and loved
but see no longer*