



We are seeking a Vicar...

...to lead us in the next steps of our journey, whilst continuing our regular services and activities in the community. At St Thomas' we are proud to be known as a community who welcomes everyone to come and worship. We are a growing church family with the mission to share the life-giving love of Jesus with all. We have been on a significant journey of rejuvenation over the last five years, and we want to keep growing. We would like someone who can continue and improve our relationships with our local schools and uniformed organisations. We would love you to have an interest in children's and youth ministry – we have taken some baby steps in this direction and need you to help us keep moving forward.



We are seeking someone to lead with enthusiasm and to fan the flame of the Holy Spirit that is already at work in this parish. Are you that person?

We are excited to begin our new chapter with you! Are you the one to help us turn the page and move forward?

Where we want to go

Roughly 3-4 years ago, the size of our parish doubled and now includes the old Parish of Westbury, following the closure of St Michael's and All Angels. There is a huge potential that is currently not being filled, and we hope that you will have ideas to help the people of Westbury come to us. We need someone who can engage with us in creating a Mission Action Plan that encompasses our new, enlarged parish. We have also recently taken small steps towards beginning Bible study and home groups and we would love you to help us expand this, as it is such an important part of discipleship. There are many people in our congregation who have gifts that can help support your ministry. We need you to enable our gifts and allow us to be brave enough to try new things.



"They soon become
like an extended
holy family"

"Love, friendship
and support"

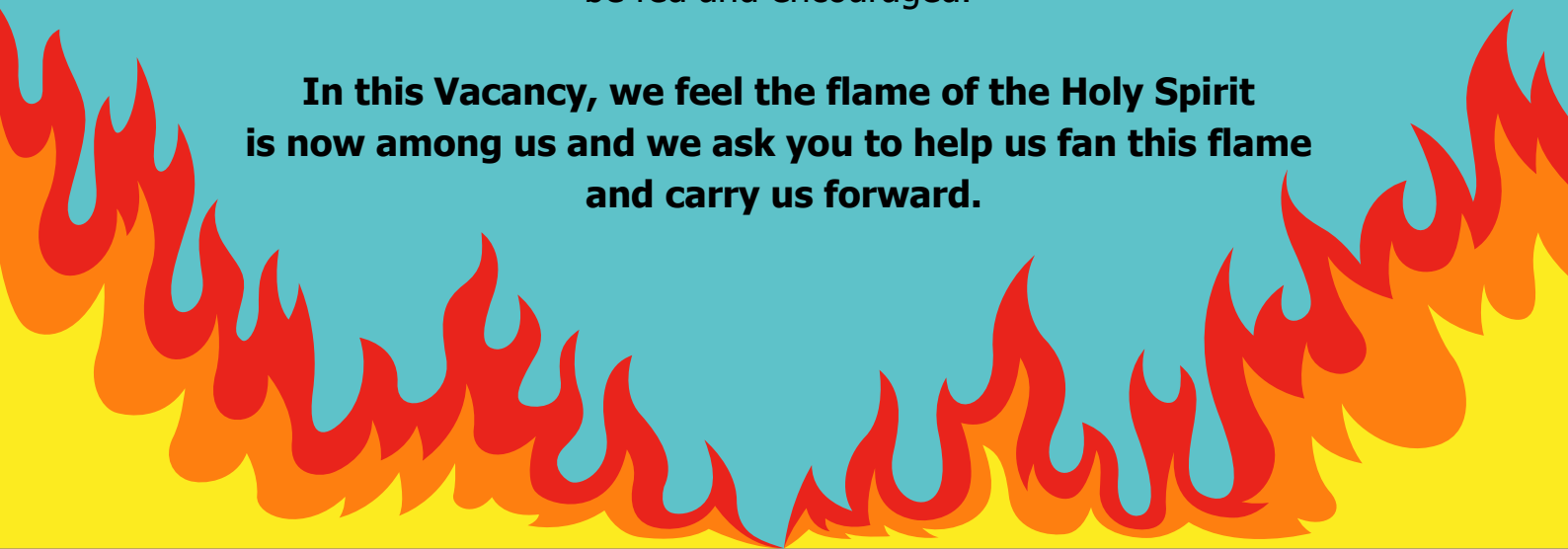
We have a friendly team on the PCC. We are 11 in number with 5 new members this year, 2026. We may be inexperienced, but we are working well together during the Vacancy. At present, we do not have any church wardens, but we are managing to cope with the extra workload quite well. At St Thomas' there are 3 Lay Leaders of Worship, who are all on the PCC, and who all enjoy a challenge and are hoping to grow with your gentle guidance.



The ability to give thought-provoking and engaging sermons is important to the people of this church. We appreciate someone with a sense of humour and an interest in the use of music during the services. Finally, in January 2026, we had a retractable screen fitted in the church and it needs someone who is willing to help us use it to its full potential, so some IT skills would be beneficial.

In our last Vacancy, we felt like sheep that longed to be fed and encouraged.

In this Vacancy, we feel the flame of the Holy Spirit is now among us and we ask you to help us fan this flame and carry us forward.



Who are we looking for?

Considering where we want to go, we would like our next vicar to be someone who can:

- Lead with enthusiasm, carrying the Parish forward, fanning the flames of the Holy Spirit.
- Help us to plan for Mission, especially to our extended Parish.
- Enable us all to grow in our own gifts and ministries.
- Have an interest and commitment to Ministry among the young, including Ministry within schools.
- Help us develop our discipleship so that we can all deepen our walks with God.
- Engage us with sermons and encourage the musical life of the Church.
- Enable us to get the most out of our new audio-visual equipment.
- Be serious when needed but also enjoy the fun of life.



Worship

We currently hold regular services three times a week (Sunday Eucharist, Tuesday and Thursday morning prayer service), with extra services for Christmas and Easter. We also offer baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals; with two baptism services and nine funerals held in 2025. Our regular Sunday services are usually streamed online, to reach those who may not be able to attend in person. Our Sunday service is Eucharistic-centred and relaxed, and we hold a Family Service once a month.



"Joyful worship"

Our worship style is a beautiful blend of upbeat music and traditional hymns. Each week, our music team thoughtfully selects songs that help us marvel at God's presence and share in His Holiness. We incorporate a variety of music from child-friendly anthems like "My Lighthouse" to time-honoured hymns such as "Great is Thy Faithfulness", ensuring that all ages feel included. Recently, we introduced a large screen which can be used to display hymn lyrics, making worship even more accessible, and we are excited to continue exploring new ways to enhance our ministry and outreach to our community.

"Isaiah 49:16 See I have inscribed
you on the palms of my hands"

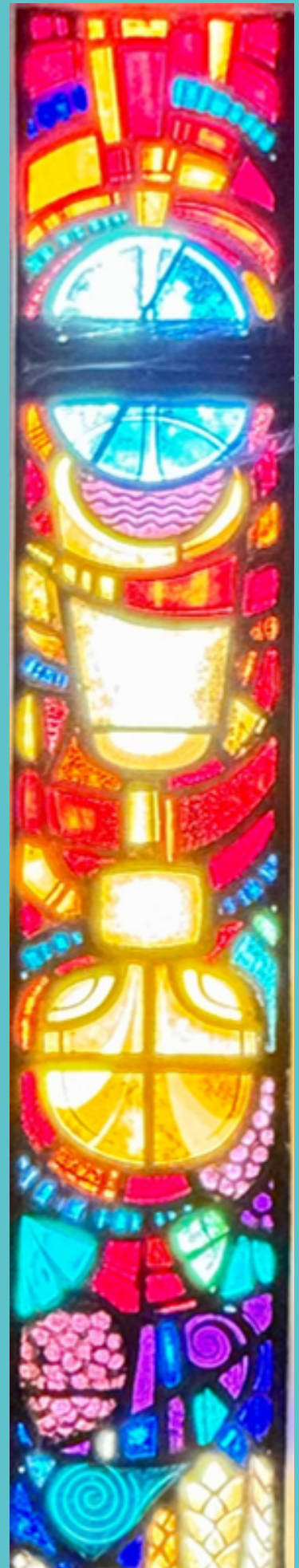
Ministry Team

We have three lay leaders of worship who lead part of or all acts of worship (but don't preach). We have a retired Reader Emeritus who, although no longer exercising Reader ministry, is still involved in church activities. We have a retired vicar who has Permission to Officiate from the Diocese and helps out with services. Finally, we also have a small serving team which is headed up by our sacristan.

"Since I've come here, I have found it a friendly place that preaches the gospel."

Diversity

There has recently been a notable increase in the congregation's diversity. In the past five years, the church went from being roughly 80% white and 65+ to a congregation with greater minority ethnic, young adult, and LGBTQ+ representation. As our church grew, the percentage of members from these demographics has increased to roughly 35%. As of April 2026, our Electoral Roll had 79 active congregation members. In our last Vacancy, our Electoral Roll had 49 members. We are proud of the initiatives we have taken to facilitate this growth, such as subsidising youth camps as well as programmes like Tom's Kidz and Tom's Tots. We truly see ourselves as a diverse and welcoming church and welcome further diversity. In our church, there is no shortage of different perspectives and voices, which we think is wonderful. As the body of Christ, we know we need different types of people who will serve different purposes and share unique insights to serve Christ as effectively as possible.



Some of our activities:

HOME GROUP

This recent addition to our worship started in May 2026. We meet weekly in a member's home and are getting to know Jesus (as well as ourselves and each other) better through structured Bible study, recently 'Fruits of the Spirit'. There are currently eight regular attendees, and we sing, chat, study, pray, and drink tea and coffee – an informal and peaceful haven in our busy week.

SATURDAY PRAYER GROUP

A weekly prayer group has been happening on Saturday mornings since March 2026. A little less formal than the traditional service of Morning Prayer, it is an opportunity to pray specifically for our church, our PCC and our community, as well as to explore and expand our understanding of different ways of praying.

CARING HERTS HUB CIC

Caring Herts Hub is a Community Interest Company that was initially started by the local hospice and has been running at St Thomas' for three years and has grown to more than thirty members. Unfortunately, the hospice had to remove funding from this initiative at the end of 2025, and the Caring Herts Hub CIC was formed to keep this important resource available to our community. We are a group for those on their own, those feeling lonely, and for those who wish to make new friends and improve wellbeing. On offer each week is 45 minutes of seated exercise with an instructor, homemade tea and cakes, book and jigsaw swap, and entertainment from quizzes, music, and crafts to Boccia. More importantly, we have a lot of fun and laughter as new friendships and support is given.



COFFEE MORNING

The church is open every Monday for people to meet for coffee and biscuits, and a chat. There is no charge for this meeting but there is a donation box for those that can contribute.

MUSIC & THE SINGING GROUP

St. Thomas's congregation loves to worship through song! The church has a piano and an organ, but we currently do not have a resident organist. We employ a local organist to play for special services such as Christmas and Easter, and three members of our congregation lead sung worship on the piano for other services. Once or twice a month some of our keenest singers share a specially rehearsed song to aid reflection during communion. In different genres – and sometimes blessed by our gifted violin or guitar players – our song may be modern, ancient, Taizé or something else, but it is always sung with enthusiasm and to the glory of God!

MOTHERS' UNION

St Thomas' MU branch members meet once a month for fellowship. We have speakers, (sometimes even our own members!) and outings. The July meeting is always a much-enjoyed garden party hosted by one of our members in her wonderful garden. We hold an advent service every year. Support is given locally by way of knitted items which are donated to care homes and our local hospice in the form of 'Charlie chicks'. The vision of Mothers' Union is of a world where God's love is shown through love, flourishing relationships and promotion of Christian family values.



MEN'S BREAKFAST

A group of men, mostly (but not solely) from St Thomas' meets on the first Saturday morning of the month in town for breakfast. We chat about all sorts of things. It is a space to talk about serious issues in our lives.

TOM'S TOTS

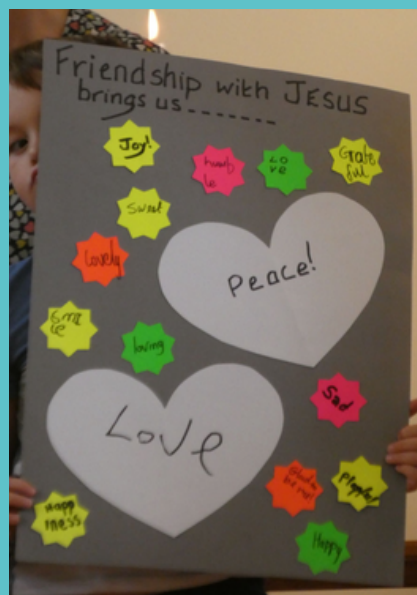
Tom's Tots, run by volunteers from the congregation during term time, offers a weekly space for pre-school children to play in a calm and settled environment while providing parents and grandparents the opportunity to interact and socialise over a cup of tea or coffee and toast. We are keen to keep this activity free of charge so that no parents or guardians are excluded.



TOM'S KIDZ

At St Thomas' we are passionate about the importance of spiritual education for the younger members of the congregation. Tom's Kidz is run by a dedicated team of volunteers on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month during the service, studying the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Activities include discussion about the day's lesson followed by creative and fun projects to reflect upon what we have learnt. We always end our sessions with a prayer for the week ahead, helping the children to grow and learn to live and practise Christianity. We'd love to continue with our children's work and encourage younger families to join us in worship and fun.

"It's nice to do activities to understand the reading"



Its fun!!!

YOUTH CAMP

Although, at present, we do not have any regular youth activity, we do encourage our youth to attend Christian youth camps and engaging our youth is something that we would like to do moving forward.

One of our Young People describes their Youth Camp experience

"St Thomas of Canterbury provides many opportunities for spiritual growth in young people. One way, and one which I am very fortunate to have taken part in a couple of times, is their involvement in Christian summer camps for young people. This is always a great opportunity to meet other young Christians from different denominations and to spend time to focus on Jesus. It is always a great time and a very good opportunity for young Christians to explore their faith."

CHARITIES

We are progressive in our desire to be involved with charitable organisations. We often have guest speakers come and educate us in what is involved in their work, and hold fundraising events to support them such as bingo nights, a Christmas tree festival and we recently held an afternoon cream tea for a Letchworth-based charity and raised over £500 for them to provide much needed support in the community. We are keen to keep these connections open and forge more partnerships in the future, to help whenever and wherever we can.

THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

St Thomas' is a keen supporter of The Children's Society as many of our congregation donate in person or use House Boxes. Our annual Christingle service is one of our most popular, where all ages join to assemble their own Christingle.

We often have a speaker from the charity who keeps us updated on the many aspects and work that The Children's Society tirelessly leads, from community projects and campaigns such as fairer start for care leavers and teenage wellbeing.



Church Buildings

Our church was built in 1938 and is brick-built and double-glazed. It has a slightly unusual set-up, in that the building is dual purpose and has the church and hall in one building separated by a wooden roller screen. St Thomas' has been a centre of worship for many years but finally became a consecrated church in 2021.

The Church Hall has its own toilets and kitchen attached. The kitchen is well used and underwent work in 2024 when the flat roof developed a rather nasty leak. The money to repair this was raised within three months through generous donations from the congregation. All the kitchen and toilet electrics were replaced during this time. The Church Hall also has a stage which has been fitted with shelves and is currently being used as a storage area for people who hire the space on a regular basis, including the Craft Club, Fight Club (a boxercise group), and Slimming World.

The Wilbury Hall was built in 1995 following extensive fund-raising activities and has recently come under the purview of a sub-committee of the PCC. It is used by the Bedford Road Preschool between 9am and 2pm Monday to Friday during term-time. There are many organisations, such as the Scouts, Beavers, and Morris Men that hire the hall most weeks.

We are proud of our buildings, and each play our part in the congregation to keep them in good condition. The next Quinquennial Inspection is due in April 2027.



Finance

St Thomas' is in a secure financial position and on track to meet all routine expenses in the current year, including the payment of our Parish Share. We have recently received an extremely substantial legacy from a late member of our congregation which has been transferred to a deposit account where it will earn interest. It is an unrestricted legacy, and we are excited to see how this money could be used for the future of our Church.

Planned Giving

Most of our planned giving is donated through the Parish Giving Scheme, following a successful Stewardship Campaign held early in 2025. We have a small deficit as of July 2026, which we expect to be cleared by the end of the year.

2025 Financial Overview			
Expenditure	£	Income	£
Parish Share	46,886	Planned Giving	32,254
Salary	6,850	Donations	13,064
Utilities	3,445	Gift Aid	6,375
Maintenance	21,321	Grants	9,862
Misc	3,717	Church Hall Lettings*	12,955
Total	82,219	Total	80,149

Children's Worker

A Diocesan Grant was made available to employ a Children's Worker which has been partially used as our Children's Worker resigned in order to return to full-time nursing. This leaves us with a balance of £2,847 still being available to spend.

Church Hall

A healthy income* is received through letting out the Church Hall.

* (please see financial section)

Wilbury Hall

Funds are accounted separately for the adjoining Wilbury Hall with the PCC members elected as trustees. Last year income through letting amounted to £24,444 with expenditure of £15,986.

Halls Manager

A manager is currently employed for five hours per week to take care of the bookings, maintenance, admin and credit control for both the Church Hall and adjoining Wilbury Hall.

Safeguarding

We are a church that keeps up-to-date with all the safeguarding policies that the Diocese produces. Policies are checked and renewed every year through the PCC. We have a Parish Safeguarding Officer who is very dedicated to her job.

Copies of the policies are displayed on the various noticeboards in the church buildings, and we keep safeguarding posters with up-to-date contact details for our Parish Safeguarding Officer, and the local and county social services, displayed in the church buildings. There are also posters up in secure locations detailing how to get help for situations involving Domestic Abuse and Modern Slavery.

All the members of our PCC and any volunteers working with children or vulnerable adults are DBS checked and undergo regular training from the Church of England in Basic Awareness, Foundations, and Recognising Domestic Abuse.

The Vicarage

The vicarage is next door to the church on Bedford Road. This is a large, detached, 4-bedroomed property with private drive and garage. It has an office, living room, kitchen, toilet and dining room on the ground floor. On the second floor are four bedrooms and the main bathroom. The garden is enclosed on all sides and has some landscaping.



There are educational establishments within easy reach of the Vicarage
(latest OFSTED ratings are in brackets):

Bedford Road Preschool (Good)
Icknield Infants and Nursery (Outstanding)
Wilbury Junior (Good)
Fearnhill Secondary (Good)
The Highfield School (Good)

There are also two popular private schools:
St Francis College
St Christopher's

Letchworth Garden City

... is the world's first garden city; was founded by Ebenezer Howard in 1903. His original plan to separate industrial and residential areas is largely still in place, thus providing a pleasant balance for residents between work and home environments.

At approximately 35 miles north of London, there is easy access to the A1M and excellent rail links to the city (just over 30 minutes on the fast train to Kings Cross or St Pancras). Cambridge is also reached by train from Letchworth. Both Luton and Stansted airports are within easy distance.

The town centre has been modernised, but many original buildings remain and are of national and international interest to visiting students of town planning, while the Heritage Museum provides their background history. There are a good range of shops and many places to eat out, have a coffee or drink, including many independent businesses.

Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation work to conserve the unique nature of the town and encourage social and cultural activities. We have the popular Broadway Cinema, a beautifully maintained Art Deco building which has four screens and facilities for offering live performances, such as the annual pantomime. Nearby is the Broadway Gallery where art exhibitions and art classes can be enjoyed. We also have a well-appointed Library.



The long-established independent bookshop 'David's Book Shop' also has a large music department and a popular cafe. It is the home of Letchworth Arts and Leisure Group, whose members enjoy a huge range of activities and interests, including walking groups, foreign languages, theatre outings, singing and many more.

Letchworth is a place of tree-lined roads and open spaces. Amenities include Norton Common nature reserve, home of the famous black squirrels. Within the Common is the popular outdoor swimming pool, tennis courts and bowling green.





Along Norton Way South you will find Howard Park and a bowling green, and the Splash Park which is always very popular with families. Standalone Farm is an open farm, where families flock to see the new-born lambs in spring.

The Leisure Centre offers opportunities for swimming, various sports and fitness training. Letchworth has many sports clubs including golf, rugby, tennis, football, cricket and croquet. The company that runs the Leisure Centre also runs Letchworth Lido, an open air heated pool, that is usually open between the end of May and September each year.

We are all saying "YES" to the next step of this church and hope you will be the one to help us push forward fanning the flame of the Holy Spirit.



We are praying for all of you who are feeling God's calling to consider our Church as the next step in your ministry and we are looking forward to meeting you.