

Woosehill Church Magazine

Sharing God's love with the community

January - February 2020



***We are on Chestnut Ave, just around the corner
from The Hawthorns School.
'All are welcome here'***

**Find us on our website
woosehillchurch.org
and on our Facebook page**



Dear Church Family and all other readers,

Happy New Year to you all. A time for new beginnings? Resolutions? The Covenant service, held at Woosehill on January 19th is always a time for sober reflection, promises made, 'must do better'. But we all face different challenges in our lives so as Catherine said we must just be 'the best we can be'.

As usual I am grateful to all who have contributed to this issue. It was wonderful to have a wedding in church just after Christmas when we celebrated the marriage of Emma and Alistair. So much preparation went into making the event special and you can read about it and see some pictures in the middle of this magazine.

Finally, I know we are always seeking help, but there are some very important requests in this issue. Please do prayerfully consider if you could respond to them.

*With every blessing,
Val*

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE:
15 March 2020**

Articles as usual preferably by e-mail to:
valerie.weedon@btinternet.com
Or to me in church

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A Letter from our Rector



The temptation in anxious and divided times is to rally to people who agree with us, who think like us, who often look like us, who hold up a mirror to us rather than opening doors for us, painting for us a picture of a different world of different experiences and different possibilities. When we feel powerless and threatened, when we feel voiceless and without influence, we seek safety in numbers, finding safety in the herd.

And that understandable instinct is wrong and it's dangerous for the future of community and nation. It is when we feel threatened and powerless, more than ever, that we must continue to be courageous, open, questing, interested. We must never stop working on building, to coin a phrase, a growth mindset. We must never stop hoping, and trusting, and dreaming.

Which is what Christmas, really, is all about- God refusing to turn his back on us but choosing to keep hoping and loving and reaching out to us. Trusting vulnerability. Absolute dependence. Placing himself into the hands of a young mother who has travelled far from home and a father in Joseph who is still trying to get his head around what has been done to his careful life. Coming into a world which is full of dark shadows and unbenevolent dictators and swords and nails and vinegar and thorns. Entering into a world of vested interests and squabbling factions and the vicious eagle of Empire.

In other words, we know the world which Jesus is born into. God takes the immense risk of being born as one of us to change the flow of history. That is Christmas, and the way we keep Christmas needs to challenge and inspire us to do the same, to take action, to take a stand, to



do something.

Voting is part of it, of course. But there is so much we can do to shape our community and make a difference before the next time we are called to the ballot box.

It can be something private- visit a neighbour, make the first move to start to fix a broken relationship.

It can be something public, in the community- volunteer at the Food-bank, help to run a Guide troop or a sports team.

It can be something political- join a party, sit down and talk to someone who thinks differently about Brexit and try to understand why they think what they think, rather than trying to change their mind.

It can be any of these or something else- but in a world which is anxious and divided it matters more than ever that we do something to step out of the mirrored walls of our echo chamber and act. Taking a stand, being vulnerable is what Christmas is all about. It is not just about a baby- it is about what the baby means and embodies, which is God's daring act of love and courage, intended to heal the world.

There is never going to be a more vital moment than now to make real our beliefs and our values, to dig in our heels against what concerns us and to live. Christmas demands nothing less of us. Neither truly does being human.

Rev'd Richard Lamey

This article first appeared in The Spire and is the talk that Richard gave to those attending the School services.

End to Christmas

Dear Friends,

The best thing about Partnership for Missional Church (PMC), I find is the provision of tools for our everyday personal and corporate Christian living and growing. Certainly 'Dwelling in the Word' is one of these basic tools helping us in our Christian journey. Advent and Christmas have been listening seasons. Questions have come about readiness for the birth of the Child and also the advent of the Judge King. What journeys have you and I embarked on this New Year, this new decade, out of our dwelling on the very familiar Christmas narratives?



Each year we celebrate the advent of the One in whom and through whom Heaven and Earth merge and bring on the onset of Eternal life. The life that all human beings of all ages and of all cultures yearn for. This Life that invades our prison of darkness with His light and lifts the load of sorrow, guilt and loneliness that weighs us down. He transforms our fears into hope, our hate into loving even our enemies and our sin and sickness into wholeness and our passivity into beneficent action.

God invites human beings and the angelic host to partner in the inauguration and ushering in of the fullness of life. Like the Shepherds we gladly go to the Shepherd in the manger of our hearts and "return glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen." By our transformed lives everyone will know that we carry Him who makes every Christmas different. Jesus has penetrated our darkness with His joy and light!

With the Magi we are galvanised into never tiring seekers of Jesus the Star of Wonder. We will spare no treasure or effort, sleep or time, hobby or relationship to find Jesus, to love and worship Him with all our heart, all our mind, all our soul and all our strength. He deserves and demands no less. We thus seek to encounter this Star, this Pearl of Great Price who already has found us and will lead us on into Eternal life, if we allow Him. I say if we allow Him because other people around His birth narrative ignored, neglected and rejected Him and so missed the joyous treasure.

The exhausted Magi arrived in Jerusalem perhaps with great expectations of a Nation resounding with street party celebrations, dancing to Hosanna, accompanied with pipe and *shofar* blasts, harps and lyres pluck and strum,



clashes of timbrel and cymbals and the beating of drums. The long-prophesied Judean divine King who would bring personal and international peace was born for goodness sake! The heavens made that very clear. To their shock and disappointment

The theologians seemed to know something of a prophecy about the promised King but were not bothered to accompany the Wise men for the six miles to Bethlehem to ascertain for themselves that indeed, the long-awaited King was born. Worse still the authorities led by no less King Herod the great were extremely disturbed and were setting in motion a plan to kill this newborn King. The religious establishment neglected and ignored Him while the political set out to destroy Him.

For me this portends a caution. My biggest lesson this Christmas has been that I could unintentionally drift into neglect of seeking the Lord with all my heart. We can be so caught up in the business and humdrum of life that we barely listen out for the voice of the Christ child. The careless, passive attitude of neglect of those people of God needs to be avoided. We must engage and take to heart the gospel in the Christmas stories and carols. It's all very nice part of the year when we can relax, sing carols and hear these stories again (dwell?). We could be trudging from Christmas to Christmas without any transformation and be caught unawares whenever Christ appears. The little Lord Jesus remains little and doesn't grow in our in our living.

I could lead prayer without praying. I could preach without seeking and receiving the Word of Life. I could baptise others while neglecting my own baptismal covenant. I could marry other people without necessarily working on my own marriage relationship. Hebrews asks the question "how can we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?"

What for you has come out of this Christmas that is going to launch you into this New Year? Something to engage with the scriptures or with your family or with your work place or with your Church? Has this Christmas made any difference to your future outlook?

Patrick

Rev'd Patrick Mukholi

Being a Steward – Could this be you?

So, what do we all get to do? I know it looks like we are always dashing around, but if there were more of usmany hands make light work!

The obvious bits.

Services – you have to make sure everything is in place, everyone is there, set the church up and clear away afterwards. As with any rota you say when you can't make it and then the services are shared out. The more stewards the fewer services you have to do.

The other bits

We meet once a month as Staff & Stewards to discuss – well anything that affects our church. This includes upcoming services, events, prayer, pastoral, things referred to us by church council: anything!

We attend church council meetings and report back what we have been up to. We tend to each have an area of responsibility, but these vary depending on what is required at any point in time. Currently Lynn looks after pastoral matters, but she has agreed to continue with this even when she steps down from being a steward, similarly Lyn was our prayer link when she was a steward and she is still doing this.

The job can be what you make it, there are always more things we can do but the fewer stewards we have, the less time we can give to other projects. It would be good to have a PMC link, a social organiser, a fundraiser - there are plenty of options.

We do have fun, there is always time for humour, and we all support each other. Yes, it can sometimes be time consuming but it is also very rewarding.

All we ask is if Patrick approaches you please prayerfully consider his request, John & I can't manage on our own.

Lynne Paine



Happy New Year to all the readers of Church Notes.

New Year's Day – January 1 – saw the start of a new venture for the Churches in Wokingham.

Seven Churches opened their doors as a Night Shelter for January and February to offer a bed for the night to anyone experiencing homelessness.

An evening meal and breakfast is also included as well as signposting to the relevant agencies who provide help and advice to those who are homeless.

This was a year in the planning and is now up and running.

I am excited to see how we have come together with volunteers, donations, funding and so much more.

Each guest is welcomed into a warm and caring environment and can relax and sleep without fear.

A friend of mine who was homeless for years and who recently passed away said about sleeping rough, 'It's the not knowing whether you will wake up in the morning or if you will be urinated on or beaten up during the night that is so difficult'.

That fear is unimaginable to me, but I have seen it in the faces of so many over the years and if we as Churches can relieve that fear for a short while then that is brilliant.

Homelessness is not something that we can ever be happy about and we must continue to find ways to prevent it in the first place.

There will always be people who withdraw from society for a period of time, to walk away from everything and everyone, and to choose homelessness as their option.

But for many, through circumstances beyond their control, find themselves to be vulnerable and homeless.

My prayer is that they will find hope in the Night Shelter and a plan for their future.

Jesus has much to say about why we should help and love each other and this is a direct command from Him.

John 13:34-35 (The Message): "Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for each other."

Captain Jan Howlin from Wokingham Salvation Army, writing on behalf of Churches Together in Wokingham - taken from the regular column in our local Wokingham paper.

Sponsor A Chair



You will start to notice that we have purchased some new backs & seats for our chairs. The cost is £35 per chair. Please can you consider sponsoring one or more chairs to help the Church meet the cost and to enable us to cover as many as possible.

All donations to Tony please.

Thank you, Staff & Stewards.



Sunday Club needs your help!!!

After many years of dedicated service, since the days that our church met in The Hawthorns school, Loretta has decided to retire as one of the leaders of Sunday Club. We are grateful to her for her contribution in the nurturing of our young people over the years.

This means that we have a vacancy for a Sunday Club Leader. The club meets every 2nd Sunday of the month and usually entails about 5 meetings per year for each leader. If you are interested in spreading the word to young people please contact Michael Taylor.

(mikemollie@hotmail.co.uk) or one of the stewards for further information or indeed if you would like to sit in during a meeting to find out what the club is all about (**absolutely no commitment!**).

We look forward to hearing from YOU.





The story of Epiphany

(a little late, but an interesting read)

In the Western churches, the Epiphany ('manifestation') became an occasion to celebrate one element in the story of Christ's birth, the visit of the far travelled magi, understood as the manifestation of Christ not only to faithful Jews, but also to those from distant lands and other faiths. Matthew's account speaks simply of 'wise men from the east', later tradition fixed their number as three, made them kings and recalled their resonant names - Caspar, Melchior and Belthasar. In this perspective, Epiphanytide is an apt season to pray for the worldwide mission of the Church. It is an important reminder to us that Jesus came to bring light and hope to those outside of religion, as well as to the irreligious parts of ourselves; that the repentance of sinners, not just the obedience of the righteous, is his chief concern.

The 'wisemen', or magi who came from the East brought with them gifts for the new born baby of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Traditionally the church has understood these to represent Jesus' place as King (gold), that he is God (frankincense) and that his death will be of significance for all of creation (myrrh).

We also celebrate at this time another Epiphany, in the Baptism of Christ in the waters of the River Jordan, when Christ's divinity was revealed to the crowds and he was proclaimed as the Son of God. This is a time for us to remember our own baptismal vows and the promise made to us in the waters of baptism: that we have received the grace of God, been washed clean of our sin, so that we might be raised in Christ, who took human form, to full and eternal life with God the Father, reminder to us that Jesus came to bring light and hope to those outside of religion, as well as to the irreligious parts of ourselves; that the repentance of sinners, not just the obedience of the righteous, is His chief concern.

Taken from the Epiphany service programme of St John's Church, Keswick



Wedding Thank You

It was so lovely for Phil and me to witness the marriage of our daughter Emma to Alistair in the church she grew up in, attending Sunday Club, Weekends Away, Match and playing her clarinet as part of the music group. Many of our guests commented on how welcome they felt.

We would all like to thank everyone who helped in any way to make their day special. Whether it was cleaning, tea making, flower arranging, music playing, computer operating, the sound system, stewarding, leading the service or just being there on the day - we did appreciate your support. A special thank you must go to Steve Lewis for all his mud clearance, he was there for hours and made such a difference, thank you ☺







The Methodist Covenant Prayer

I am no longer my own but yours.
Put me to what you will,
rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing,
put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you,
or laid aside for you,
exalted for you,
or brought low for you;
let me be full,
let me be empty,
let me have all things,
let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours. So be it.

And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven.'

The Covenant service

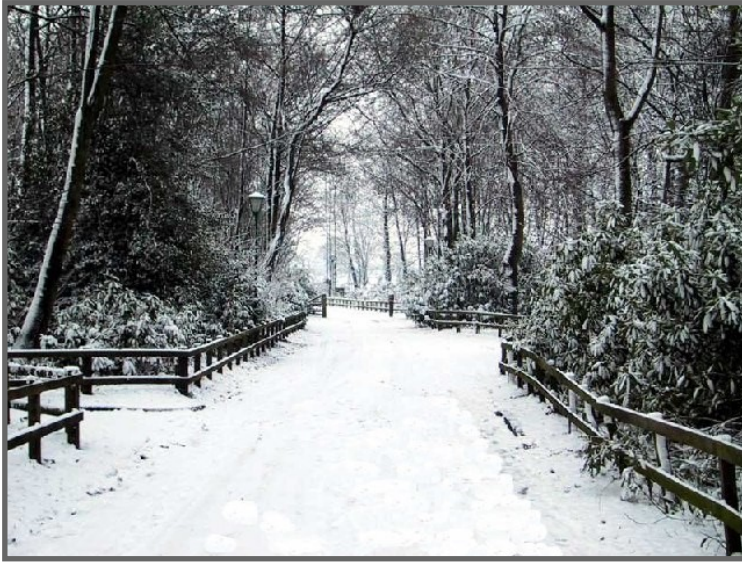
Methodists hold an annual Covenant Service, at which we celebrate all that God has done for us, and affirm that we give our lives and choices to God.

Most churches hold the service in the New Year, but some hold them in September, at the beginning of the Methodist year.

The traditional Covenant prayer (shown above) makes it very clear that this affirmation is a serious one that embraces the whole of our life, in all its parts. Most people find it quite tough to say, and really mean it. But the prayer is so central to the Christian life that other Churches have also adopted it.

In our culture we tend to prize our ability to make decisions and choose our own path in life. It can feel very hard to give that up. But this prayer is like a love poem. It is about surrendering to God in love and joy.

A Winter Prayer



“Lord, In the midst of winter, when the days are cold and wind can pierce, remind us of the warmth of your love. In the midst of winter, when days are short, dawn comes late, and dusk arrives early, remind us that in the darkness your light still shines. In the midst of winter, when the flowers of spring still lie hidden in the earth, when leaves are off the trees, and the world can seem bleak, remind us that Easter is but a short time away. And when in our lives we feel as if we are experiencing a season of winter, reach out to us with the power of your resurrection so that we may feel the warmth of your love and see your light that alone can take away the darkness of our soul.”

Cal Wick

(This beautiful prayer appeared in the Yeldall Manor prayer letter for November)



It was a place to think about what's in your heart. You don't usually do that at school

PAUSE, or interactive prayer space is back in schools. It gives young people under pressure a much-needed chance to step off the treadmill for a moment, stop and reflect on what really matters. A Year 8 student once described it as **“A lie-in for my mind during school time.”**

[PAUSE](#) will be opened to Years 7-11 at Emmbrook School, and Year 7 at the Holt School this January. That's nearly 700 local young people taking part in this unique experience.

Looking inside and outside

The classrooms we're using will be totally transformed by our creative volunteers into different 'zones'. Each zone presents an interactive opportunity to reflect on something that's going on in their own life, or to think about the world around them – two aspects that we would associate with prayer.

This year, we've created a new zone about homelessness. Drawing round their own feet, the young people can have a go at putting themselves in the shoes of somebody who finds themselves homeless. They can learn about the different faces of homelessness and about the new Wokingham Night Shelter.

Other creative zones focus on hopes and dreams, releasing burdens, reflection, forgiveness, and big questions.

For some of the students, PAUSE might be a spiritual experience; for others it will be a much-needed space to release stress, relax or think more deeply about something.

A few years ago, a teacher told us: “I cried the first time I walked into PAUSE. I tell the young people there's no shame in crying.” As she left, she added, “There's a real need for this reflective time.”

PRAYER

Epiphany to Lent 2020

Bible Discussions on Prayer

BOLD I APPROACH



Tuesday Bible Discussions
Woollahill Church, 8pm to 9.30pm

January 14, 21, 28, February 4, 11, 18

ALL welcome - beginners or veterans



INTERACTIVE BIBLE STUDIES



PRAYERS



If you would like prayers for yourself, your family or friends, please contact the Prayer Coordinator, Lynn Smith woosehillprayerchain@gmail.com. Messages on the prayer chain are totally confidential and only seen by those Church members on the chain, if you would also like to be included in the intercessions on a Sunday morning then please let Lynn know.

“I strongly suspect that if we saw all the difference even the tiniest of our prayers make, and all the people those little prayers were destined to affect, and all the consequences of those prayers down through the centuries, we would be so paralysed with awe at the power of prayer that we would be unable to get up off our knees for the rest of our lives.”

Peter Dreeft, Professor of Philosophy, Boston College

If you have any other enquiries or would like to speak to a minister for any reason, please contact Rev'd Patrick Mukholi 0118 9773397/07448 794154, patrick.mukholi@spauls.org.uk



The Methodist Church

GOD IN LOVE UNITES US – STUDY SESSIONS

You will be aware that we have been asked to respond to the report “God in Love Unites us” produced by the Marriage and Relationships Task Group of the Methodist Conference. The report and study guide can be found on the Methodist Church Website:

www.methodist.org.uk/MandR19 but there are paper copies available too. Please read the report and if you would like share discussion with others then join one of the study groups around the Circuit:

Bagshot Methodist Church: Wednesdays 2pm: 8th Jan, 12th Feb, 11th March.

Bracknell Methodist Church: Mondays 10.30am: 20th Jan, 17th Feb, 16th March.

Crowthorne Methodist Church: Saturdays 10am: 18th Jan, 15th Feb, 7th March.

Sandhurst & Yateley Methodist Church: Tuesdays 8pm: 14th Jan, 11th Feb 10th March.

Wokingham Methodist Church: Sundays 6pm: 19th Jan, 16th Feb, 15th March.

Catherine Bowstead



The Parish of St Paul, Wokingham Evensong Sermon Series 2020

Some Parables of Jesus

Each preacher has been invited to choose one of the parables Jesus told, explore its meaning and then connect it to the world we live in today.

All Services happen at 6.15pm at St Paul's Church, Reading Road, Wokingham unless it says otherwise.

Jan 19: **Jason Searancke** (*Children's Advocate*) on the Good Samaritan

Feb 16: **Patrick Mukholi** (*Associate Priest*) on Luke 16.1-13
the unscrupulous manager

March 15: **Piers Bickersteth**
(*Arborfield and Barkham*) on Luke 15.11-32, the Prodigal

May 17: **Stephen Pullin**
(*Archdeacon of Berkshire*) on the sower

June 21: **Miles Welborn** (*ordinand*)

July 19: To be confirmed

September 20: **Philippa White**
(*Oxford Cathedral*) on Luke 15.1-10, the lost coin and the lost sheep

October 18: **Jonathan Dean** (*Methodist National Officer for Training for Ministry*) on Luke 13.18-21, the mustard seed and the yeast



GRAB A TEAM ITS QUIZ NIGHT

Quiz Night at the Parish Rooms

Saturday 8 February

6.30pm for 6.45 start (eating at 8pm
- fish/chicken/vegetarian option and chips)
Teams of 6/8 - arrange your own team or come
and join with others on the night
Adults £10, Children £5, Family £25
Tickets from Chris Piper

COFFEE & CHAT

ST PAUL'S PARISH ROOMS

READING ROAD, WOKINGHAM

**EVERY
FRIDAY
2 - 4pm**

At a loose end ?
Feeling lonely ?
Had a bad week ?



Drop in for a drink and a friendly chat



FIRST STEPS



for pre-school children and their parents, grandparents or carers to introduce the children to church in a relaxed, fun and friendly way.

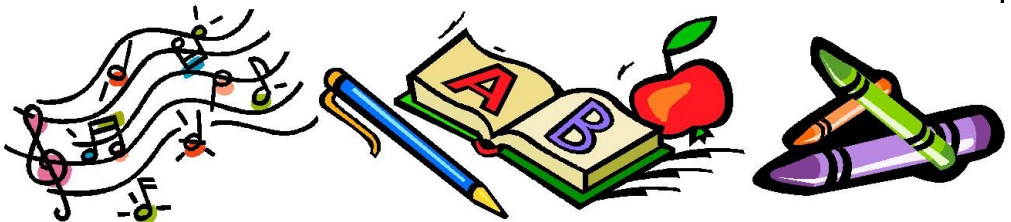
**2nd Thursday of Each Month during Term Time
10.15-11.15am**

**13th February; 12th March;
Children's Chapel**

St Paul's Church, Wokingham

Please come along with your pre-school children for
songs, stories, craft activities and **refreshments**.

For more information call Rev'd Richard Lamey 0118 327 9116
or
Liz Gallagher 0118 989 1176



REGULAR MEETINGS

Sunday

Church services - see Services Diary and weekly newsletter

Mondays at 8pm: House Group

For more information talk to Geoff Peck: 9786711

geoffpeck@hotmail.com

Tuesday

Bible discussion: Exploring Faith from 8-9.30pm in the church.

Wednesday

Tadpoles group: Coffee and play for pre-school children and their carers
9.00-11.00am in term time.

Contact: Val Weedon: 9791156/ 07919062770

or valerie.weedon@btinternet.com

Thursday

Together in prayer: monthly on third Thursday from 8-9pm

Contact Lyn Brown: 9782816

Saturday

Church work party: first Saturday in month 10.30am

Contact John Hoskins: 9792597

Church contacts

Rev'd Patrick Mukholi - 23 Sheridan Way, Wokingham, RG41 3AP 0118 9773397 patrick.mukholi@spauls.org.uk

Rev'd Richard Lamey, The Rectory, Holt Lane 0118 3279116 richard.lamey@spauls.org.uk

St Paul's Parish Office, Reading Road, Wokingham RG41 1EH
0118 979 2122 (Parish administrator Louise Cole)
office@stpauls-wokingham.org.uk

Rev'd Catherine Bowstead

5 Chetwode Close, Wokingham RG40 2LL 0118 9781756
minister@wokinghammethodist.org.uk

**For room hire bookings contact Tony Sayer on 0118 9786560
or email tony.sayer@ntlworld.com**

**Pattern of Services at Woosehill**

Keep an eye out in the newsletter for more up to date information too. You can receive this weekly by email:

contact Alison Lewis at woosehill.church@gmail.com

1st Sunday:

8.45am Holy Communion

10am Morning Worship

2nd Sunday:

**10am Holy Communion with
Sunday Club for our young people**

3rd Sunday

8.45am Holy Communion

10am Morning Worship

4th Sunday

10am Holy Communion

4pm Messy Church - for all ages

6.15pm Evening Reflective Worship

(5th Sunday)

10am Café Church

5.30pm Service at Suffolk Lodge Care Home