

Woosehill Church Magazine

July - August 2020



Sharing God's love with the community

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woosehillchurch.org
and on our Facebook page**



Dear Church Family and all other readers,

Another online magazine and one in which we say our sad goodbye to Patrick, Helen and Jonathon but look forward to welcoming our new Methodist minister Soba and his wife Nava, as well as Cara and her family, recently joining the parish. Read further about them in these pages. We look forward to developing new relationships with them all.

As our churches emerge slowly from lockdown, our Rector Richard is rightly taking a cautious approach to the opening of our churches. **St Paul's is now open daily from 11-3 for private prayer**, but Woosehill church remains closed as it is not routinely open during the week.

For the latest at the time of publication see Richard's letter on Page 13. - BUT things are changing on a day to day basis!

Stay safe and God bless,
Val

Next deadline: 12 September
Articles as usual preferably by e-mail to:
valerie.weedon@btinternet.com

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Goodbye to Patrick

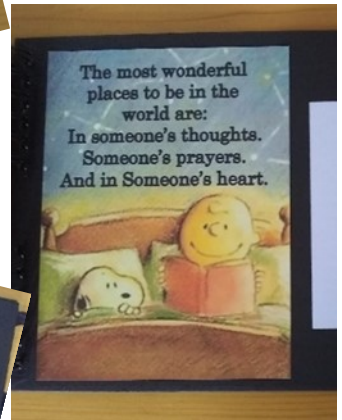


In “normal times”, the stewards would have placed a large card at the back of the church for everyone to sign with their personal message. But of course, in our current social distancing times this was not possible. So, it was decided in a meeting with Richard that a scrapbook would be a great alternative. It was thought that everyone could email me their message and these could be printed and stuck into a scrapbook.

Once I started planning, I decided that the book could be improved by adding some photos for a bit of colour. I sent out an email to all three churches and in no time at all my inbox was filling up! Prints of the photos were ordered and then the gluing and sticking began! I wanted to make sure that the book was filled cover to cover.

Some late photos came along and I also realised that some significant occasions were not represented. So, these photos just had to be home printed - fingers crossed, the colours are never quite the same and the pub looks gloomier than normal! So that everyone can see the finished product I have taken some photos of the book, a few of which are shown below. Sorry that I can't include more but Val does want to be able to add some other stories.

Lynne Paine



Our new Minister introduces himself

Warm greetings to all of you at Woosehill in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Nava and I are looking forward to joining you in September. We were positively impressed with your work and witness when we came around to see you in November last year. Now that the time is drawing near for us to say good bye to Chipping Norton and moving over to Woosehill, it is good to give a little introduction of ourselves to you.



Nava and I hail from Sri Lanka. I come from a Methodist background; Nava's family have always been Anglican. When Nava's sister was raising her young family, they started worshipping at the local Methodist Church which was a short walking distance from their home. This is where I met Nava and she is stuck with Methodism ever since. Nava is an accountant by profession and currently working locally in Chipping Norton at a Telecom firm.

My second genesis was to be in Wales. After a brief stay in London where I felt the call to ministry, I went to Bangor University in North Wales to do my degree in Theology and concurrently candidated for the ministry. Then for two years, I trained at Wesley College in Bristol.

Most of the time my ministry has been in South Wales. Starting at Newport Circuit, we then moved to Cardiff and then further westwards to Port Talbot. Having lived and worked in Wales for a long time, I always have a close affinity with this land and its people. This current station in Chipping Norton, where I hold superintendency, saw us having to live away from Wales for the first time in many years. So I brought a bit of Wales closer to home every year by getting a Male Voice Choir to perform at the Town Hall!

Nava enjoys cooking and baking and, if inspired, a bit of painting and sewing. I love gardening, reading, listening to classical music and, once in a while, filming and editing. There will be plenty of time for us to get to know each other in the coming years.



In the meantime, we send our love and warm greetings to you. We look forward to meeting you and working with you, sharing God's ministry among you.

With much warmth and all good wishes,

Nava & Soba Sinnathamby

The Meditation group

The Meditation Group has been meeting monthly, on 2nd Thursday, since March, recently on Zoom.

Next meeting: Thursday 9th July 1.15-1.45pm
(this may have taken place before you read the magazine)

Zoom details in Richard's email nearer the time

We start with a reading from the Bible or other Christian source, followed by 20 minutes of silent meditation.

We end with the Grace.

All welcome, any faith or none.

Please email me for further details: meditationgroup@spauls.org.uk

Thanks

Susannah Riley



Woosehill Church Quiz – on Zoom!



One of the few upsides to emerge from Lockdown is that many of us have become far more familiar with taking part in on-line meetings. As a congregation the coffee mornings on Zoom after the on-line 9.30am Sunday Service have become part of our weekly pattern. With that in mind we decided to stage the first ever virtual Woosehill Church Quiz on Zoom. Sometime before Lockdown started, we had pencilled in a date at the beginning of June for our traditional Fish & Chip Supper quiz and so the Zoom event we held on Saturday June 20th was only a couple of weeks later than had originally been planned.

As usual Phil researched the questions and created the presentation. Lynne handled the marketing and took responsibility for managing the technology. Whilst we had both taken part in Zoom quizzes before, this was the first time we had run a quiz ourselves using the 'break-out room' facility. We were delighted in the interest expressed in taking part in the quiz and had around 50 people signed up to participate, forming a total of 9 teams. Team Murgatroyd was probably the most geographically dispersed with Hannah from London, Libby from Croatia(!) and Doreen & Timothy in Wokingham all taking part. It was lovely to see Janette Smith and son Tim from Exmouth joining us and linking up in the team break-out room with Sue & Geoff Peck and a couple of Geoff's brainy friends on what turned out to be the winning team, 'The Lions'.

Our biggest concern beforehand in running the quiz on Zoom was that the technology wouldn't work for us but a mid-week trial with some game volunteers demonstrated that we could make it work. On the night itself there was a mild panic in the Paine household when everyone said they couldn't hear the sound for the Music Round questions. Fortunately, a helpful (but unidentified) voice was able to direct Lynne to the 'share computer sound' button and the situation was duly saved! So, whilst there may have been no Fish & Chips and a little less heckling of the question master than usual, as a purely social event the evening was considered to be a success. Moreover, the event managed to raise £240 towards church funds. Thank you to all who took part. If you are interested in another one just let us know.

Phil and Lynne Paine



Royal Ascot in Westward Road!

Our road is a very sociable one and we have a street wide WhatsApp group so any excuse and we like to get together - socially distanced now of course. Some of the Ladies were missing going to Ascot this year and getting dressed in their frocks and hats, (I have lived near many a race course but have never been or placed a bet except for a work sweepstake). I was out with everyone for the last race and duly paid my pound chose my horse because I liked the jockey's colours the horse was called 'Who dares Wins' so had a good name, Some of the residents stood close to the television and were saying 'Who Dares Wins' is doing well I just thought he would slow towards the end then I was presented with a bowl with £11 in it - he had won, so I came home very happy! I hasten to add the men were out for the beer in shorts and shirts!

The evening wasn't quite so successful for me - it was the annual great church Quiz hosted by Phil and Lynne Paine. It was a great evening seeing so many friends on the screen and then being able to chat more freely in our breakout rooms with our teams, but luck or brains wasn't with me or my team. What the heck we had had a great evening. Thank you to Lynne and Phil for all their hard work.

Lynn Smith



Introducing Cara

We welcome Cara as Licensed Lay worker from the beginning of July, her ordination as curate to our parish being delayed to September due to the current limit on church services.



As Cara prepared to leave her old parish towards the end of June, she preached this sermon which I have edited for us - it had very much the same theme as the one Richard preached on the same day:

“Do not fear “

Just over two years ago, I preached my first ever sermon, on the story of Abraham and Sarah, in Beenham. I was so nervous, I couldn't concentrate on the service until after the sermon, going over the words in my head, retelling their story as my story, praying that God would be with me. But through it all, the words of everyone who had supported and encouraged me echoed in my heart that morning... **do not be afraid.**

Matthew's Gospel repeats this phrase three times in different ways. Have no fear... do not fear... do not be afraid... These words can bring us comfort and reassurance now, in a time where, for lots of people, this phase of half-lockdown is in many ways, more scary than full lockdown. For people with certain immune diseases or disabilities, full lockdown made life a little easier because the rules were clearer, people were keeping their distance and only going out when absolutely necessary. There was a renewed sense of community spirit which helped to alleviate our fears; everyone was having to stay away from their friends and family, meaning that there was a sense of solidarity in isolation. Now that solidarity has gone, and the fear is returning. And yet, we have the hope and reassurance that, whatever happens, God sees us, God notices everything. Things are scary, but God will be with us.

Do not be afraid.

There are other fears for us right now, we are at a pivotal point regarding climate change, where the start of 2020 saw fires burning across Australia and floods devastating parts of the UK. As we heard in Matthew's Gospel,



'are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father'. Again, our task is great, and global, and will take each of us doing our part as individuals, and as a society, as a country, as a continent and as a planet. It would be easy to be overwhelmed by the heartbreak, but do not fear, there is nothing secret that will not become known. Our efforts at recycling, at reusing what we have, at refusing to buy what we do not need, at choosing the options that do the least harm, do not be afraid, all will become known.

We are also at a really exciting point in discovering what comes next for the church. Exciting because what has been uncovered for many people, is the huge amount of online church that was already happening before our buildings closed. Online church communities where people gathered, prayed together, discussed the Scriptures, found support and ways of worshipping together that worked well. Since the end of March, there have been more and more online church services and we are learning all the time from those who were already doing this. We have learnt not to be fearful, because though it is different, we are finding God in our homes and in each other still. Now that we have uncovered the ways of online church, we will not cover them back up again, rather we can take what we have found and use it alongside any other way of physical church services. Church will be different in the future, and do not be afraid, because this is good news! We are also aware that there are some people who find online church incredibly hard, and desperately miss the prayerful stillness of our church buildings. Do not fear, what has been covered up will be uncovered when it is safe to do so, and God will be waiting with us in our darkness, ready to help us sparkle in the light.

The message woven throughout Scripture for us to find and believe is '**Do not fear.**' This is not just an empty saying, it is a holy reality, and it is our holy reality. Jesus utters these words time after time throughout the Gospels, not because no harm will come to those who follow him, but because there will be times of hardship, of pain and of grief... and yet we live knowing that God is holding our hands as tightly as a parent does when their toddler is learning to walk. **Do not be afraid**, because, even if it takes a while, all those things which need to be uncovered will be. The whispered voice of God in the dark, will be heard in the light.

The good that we do unseen will be seen by God, and likewise, the wrongs that need to be righted will be, we do not need to fear.

And a message to the people of Cara's previous parish:

Thank you all for the many different ways that you have supported me over the years, the prayers that have surrounded me and my family, the love and encouragement that has come like a steady trickle from all across the benefice. Thank you for the times when you have told me not to be afraid, because God is with me always. Thank you for the times when you have told me not to fear, as you have been generous in the ways you have helped me grow and learn. Thank you for the times when you have held my hand steady as I take the next step, and for all the times when my fear has disappeared because I have looked at your faces and seen Christ reflected back.

Do not fear the future, do not be afraid, because God has always been with you, Christ is every bit a part of you as he was when we were receiving the bread and wine together, and the Holy Spirit is forever breathing life and hope into our communities.

Do not fear, for you are God's beloved child, fearfully and wonderfully made.

Amen

A prayer for every day

***Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.***

***Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.***

***Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.***

Amen.



(from Lectio 365 part of the 24/7 prayer movement)

‘A Rose by any other name ----’

As some of you know the Hattaways have more than a passing interest in the plays of William Shakespeare. My younger brother (another Michael) gave us this rose when we were married — named after the playwright, with its fragrance which is rich and heady. The colour of the flower is so deep and the double flowers are very pretty. It seems to avoid rust and blight.

We can recommend it.

Judi and Mick Hattaway

What July and August will look like

In July we will continue to have our main service of the week in the parish at 9.30am on a Sunday morning which will continue to be livestreamed from the Rectory and which will still feature as many different voices and faces from all three Churches as possible.

We are adding in a 5pm Eucharist at St Paul's on the 12th, 19th and 26th of July. This will happen under fairly stringent social distancing rules and it will feel very different to the services we are used to. (The advice on Communion only came out last night so there is more work to be done on all of this). It will be said and not sung. People will have to sit where they are told to sit and to sit apart from others. There will be no choir and the sacrament will be received in bread only. We are encouraged to keep things short which will mean a short homily and brief intercessions.

All of that said, I am thrilled that we will be able to obey Christ's instruction to gather together to "do this in remembrance of me" again. It felt wrong to delay celebrating the Eucharist together for any longer than we had to. I am already feeling really excited about this, that a deep ache in the soul will be ended.

Then in August we will (technology permitting) move to doing the 9.30am Livestream in Church. We will keep it simple to start with, until we make sure that everything is working, and then build up things again as we have done over the last months. On most Sundays, the Eucharist will be celebrated and those who are present will be able to receive the bread. Services will happen on different weeks at St Paul's and Woollahs, and we will continue to make sure that St Nick's are fully represented in who reads and prays.

We will obviously send out more details about all of this as we work them through, but I wanted to let you have this information as soon as possible so you know what is happening and can start to think and pray and prepare.

Richard



From Bishop Steven



As you will know the Prime Minister has announced that places of worship may re-open from 4th July, providing certain conditions are met and government guidance is followed. This is very welcome news. Some of us will be able to meet again in our familiar and much-loved buildings. We will be able to restore and rebuild some of what we have lost, including our sacramental life together. However, it will mean that every benefice will need to prepare carefully and there will be much to think through. The detailed guidance from the government is still in preparation. Updated guidance from the national church will need to follow. It may, therefore, be several days before you have all the information you need to begin to plan for physical services to start again.

At this important point in the journey we want to underline some key principles for the Diocese. The most important is to prepare prayerfully, thoroughly, carefully and locally, with clergy and PCC's consulting together about how to resume public worship. This is not a decision to be rushed. Every parish and benefice is different. There are serious health and safety considerations to be worked through in every place. We will be able to meet in our buildings again, but this will be far from a return to normal life before.

Whatever pattern of worship is offered will need to be sustainable and will, most probably, need to continue alongside the virtual worship and fellowship which has been so fruitful during the lockdown. We may, therefore, need to look at simpler patterns of worship for a time, especially in multi-parish benefices.

In advance of the guidance, there are some things we do know: we will not be able to sing together, at least for a time. Holy Communion will need to be administered in one kind. Congregations will need to be socially distanced from one another. Services will generally need to be shorter (but we may need more of them). There cannot yet be refreshments served or long conversations at the door. There will need to be good hand hygiene. Many of our congregations will continue to be shielding or have family members who are vulnerable or who may be hesitant about returning to public worship. Movement throughout the church will need to be thought about carefully. There will be additional cleaning requirements. There will be restrictions about the numbers who are able to come, depending on the size of the building, , because of the need for social distancing.

Wokingham Foodbank

Since the lock down started we have fed over 2000 people across the borough which is a 400 % increase in demand compared to the same period last year. We routinely distribute 1 ton of food a week to households who struggle to afford food and other essentials. We are thrilled to have been awarded a National Lottery Community Fund award for £10,000! This money will go a long way to help us support people in our community.



25/06/2020



- Toilet Roll
- Washing up liquid
- Deodorant
- Soap
- Tinned potatoes
- Hot dogs (long life)
- Rice pudding
- Custard
- Sponge puddings
- Snacks/chocolate

Unfortunately we do not have suitable storage facilities for fridge/freezer items therefore we are unable to accept perishable foodstuffs.

At the present time we have an abundance of the following:

Soup, Baked Beans, Pasta, Rice, Tinned Fish, Tea Bags and Long Life Milk



An update on the Reading Interfaith Women's Group

At the beginning of June, we met through Zoom to discuss our faith community experience during lockdown. A range of faiths were represented including Christian, Muslim, Sikh and Pagan. For all of us, the period of lockdown has coincided with major festivals: Easter, Ramadan, Vaisakhi, and Ostara. There were several common themes amongst us.

All faiths have embraced online technology to share services, prayers, and meetings. People who usually struggle to get to services or prayers are now able to access them. I was particularly touched by a Muslim who, having been unable to take part in Friday prayers at the mosque, due to her young children, has now joined in because prayers are taking place at home with the whole family, including children.

Life has slowed down, and this has made it easier to focus during Lent and Ramadan. We are missing meeting together with our communities and being in our churches, mosques and gurdwara. We agreed that it has been hard as Christians to have churches closed to people to just drop in. All communities have been supporting others in various ways: discovering sewing skills to make scrubs or face masks; making food; supporting care homes; an emergency help line; providing transport.

We wonder how this period of time will change how our communities organise services/prayers/meetings in future and remain inclusive.

Susannah Riley



Poppies

Throughout lockdown, Jane Kraft and Judi Hattaway have sent out daily emails to the pastoral carers of the parish, to support the group and brighten our days. This is from Judi, a photo taken recently by her daughter Laura of poppies in Hampshire.

Thank you to Jane and Judi for your support and caring.



"All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall. . . " writes the Apostle Peter. This fleeting bloom is probably the common poppy *Papaver subpiriforme* (also known as *Papaver rhoeas*).

Spring in the Holy Land comes early. By February, the hills above the Jordan Valley are filled with riotous masses of wildflowers. What a display! In fact, the hills above the Ghor [Jordan Valley] have one of the most diverse floras per unit area on our planet. One of the plants that stands out here is the poppy with its red flowers.

A special place to see poppies is along the road from Jerash to Angana. The poppies grow amongst the olive trees; the crimson colour of the flowers complementing the dark green leaves of the olive. Each poppy plant has a single flower which rises from a prominent bud. Poppies are distinctive in having petals crinkled in the bud. As they open, they smooth out and within a day fall, leaving the ground littered with the petals, which soon dry, and lose their colour in the hot sun. Fruits produce abundant, small seeds dispensed through numerous pores.



Our Giving

A message from our senior steward John Hoskins:
I would just like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their continued financial support for the Church in these strange times. Although our income is down by a third overall because we have no lettings, it is very heartening to be able to report that congregational giving is actually slightly up on the same time last year, to say nothing of the generosity of the contributions to Patrick's leaving present.



On that note, Patrick's last service was extremely well "attended" and greatly appreciated and by the time you read this he will already be busy in his new parish of Winkfield, Cranbourne & Chavey Down – not too far down the road. At the same time, we prepare to welcome the Reverend Sobanathasar Sinnathamby (Soba for short) who will also live on Woosehill. Soba's welcome service will be at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 8th September at Woosehill Church. Quite what form the service will take remains to be seen, but you can read about Soba in an article he has written for us elsewhere in this issue.

So, once again, thank you to everyone – keep it up! And let us look forward to the time when we meet again in the flesh.

John

Winnersh Grub Club

I have been asked by Anna Rogerson from the Baptist Church if we could muster up some support for a new Grub Club that they hope to form in Winnersh, as we are fairly close. Winnersh church is also being asked. The help they need at present is filling meal bags and treat bags. Everything will be provided. It is your time that is needed and you will be doing from your own home. There are quite a few pockets of poverty in Winnersh that need the support of the Grub Club

If you feel you would like to part of this new initiative can you please let me know. The more help we have the easier it will be for us all.

Lynn

News from Yeldall Manor



IT'S THE highlight of the year for many and, thanks to the wonders of modern technology, not even the coronavirus can stop it.

Yeldall Manor, an addiction rehabilitation centre for men, held its annual open day on Saturday, July 4 – but it wasn't open to the public.

Instead of the traditional hog roast and the chance to enjoy live music, strawberries, and cream, it went online.

The Hare Hatch charity has continued to operate reasonably normally throughout the pandemic, accepting residential guests for its Christian-based programme that helps men who have problems with alcohol and drugs. While the volunteering outside of the manor house has been curtailed, other activities have taken its place.

Fundraising manager Sue Hedger explained: "We've stayed open and have been taking on new residents safely as we can. The need (for our work) is just as great as ever, if not more, as community services can't do what they usually do during the pandemic. The programme has altered slightly, but we have a large house and grounds, which have been really good.

The residents have had more spare time. They've made an old swimming pool into a prayer garden and they've been able to enjoy more creative pastimes."

And there have been modifications to the site, with one-way systems in place, minimising contact and visitors. This has meant the site has stayed free of the virus.

The centre has seen some of its residents have to stay on for longer, rather than moving on to the next stages in the recovery programme.

"Some have been able to move back in with families and friends, others are waiting until it's safer to do so," Mrs Hedger said.



The open day normally attracts hundreds of visitors and is a chance for them to meet residents, play games, buy items from Chissock Woodcraft – one of the recovery programmes on site.

Instead, the event will be streamed via its Facebook page and feature Christian songs, some testimonies from the residents and an update on Yeldall's work throughout the year.

The event usually raises thousands for the charity, so it is asking for people to make a donation towards its bursary fund. This helps pay the costs of people who would otherwise not be able to afford the recovery programme.

A recent fundraiser, RIDE for Recovery, was held virtually earlier this month and saw 60 people travel 3,300 virtual miles, raising more than £20,500 for this work.

"It's excellent," Mrs Hedger said. "We had teams cycling from Woodley to the Hebrides, some residents did a virtual marathon, then went from London to Paris. Another did a sponsored hack.

"All ages and abilities were able to participate."

To donate, log on to www.justgiving.com/fundraising/yeldallopeday

Esthertime helpline launches

Yeldall has also launched a new helpline aimed at women who are worried about their alcohol usage.

Many of use have been drinking more during lockdown, and some may feel that their intake is getting out of hand.

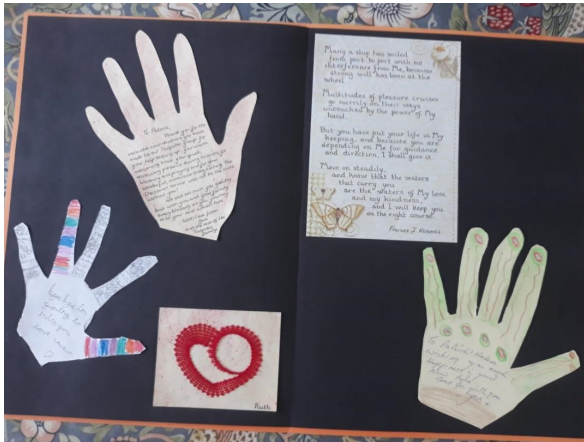
The Esthertime Helpline is available from 9am to 5pm on weekdays. To take part, call 0118 940 4411 and ask to speak to Mandy.

A slightly edited version taken from the Wokingham Paper Facebook page

A Tadpoles Farewell

On a very hot day at the end of June the Tadpoles leaders invited Patrick to Lynn's garden for coffee and cake - provided by Sue. It was a thank you for all the support he has given to our group of under fives and their carers.

Sue had put together a lovely card with handprints from some of us, letting Patrick know how much we have valued him. In his top pocket you can also see the beautiful lace bookmark, made by Ruth.





Our current overseas church charity

Have you ever wondered whether your prayers really make a difference? News of conflict and suffering in the Middle East makes it easy to feel helpless and too far away to help. But that's not the case! The messages we receive from our Christian partners in Israel and Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq and Syria show just how much your prayers strengthen them every day. But when we pray, we are never alone. We are part of a much larger family of prayer.

You could pray:

- That a hungry person gets a hot meal today
- That someone who is ill gets to see a doctor
- That a person with disabilities doesn't encounter discrimination
- That a child has a chance to play
- That a bullet misses its human target

Your prayers count. They don't have to be about everybody and they don't have to solve everything, but a small prayer might just make a huge difference.



As Government restrictions are eased, please remember...

Some people are still going to stay at home, by choice, and that's ok.

Some businesses and shops are delighted as they can reopen and welcome staff back into their place of work, that's ok.

Some people are still scared about getting the virus and a second peak happening, so they're staying away, that's ok.

Some people are wearing masks, that's ok.

Some people will think the pubs are going to be too busy to visit, that's ok.

Some people will be queuing to get into the barbers or hair salon, that's ok.

Some people are excited to start somewhere new after weeks without a job, that's ok.

Everyone has different feelings, opinions and desires and that's ok.

If you need to go out, respect others while you do so.

Don't judge other people for what they are doing, or what you think they are doing.

And most importantly BE UNDERSTANDING.

Be kind to each other.





Woosehill Church Services and meetings

See also Richard's letter on page 13 for an update on services for July and August

At **9.30** each Sunday morning an Anglican service is livestreamed from the Rectory on YouTube through the St Paul's website:

www.stpauls-wokingham.org.uk

And also available on Facebook led by Richard Lamey with contributions from across the parish.

Why not join our Zoom group for coffee after the service? Contact us for details.

An audio service is streamed from Wokingham Methodist church at **10.30** led by Catherine Bowstead and others.

www.wokinghammethodist.org.uk/

(From 'Sunday Worship' go to 'Recorded services')

We also Zoom:

Bible study on Tuesday evenings 8-8.30pm

Morning Prayer for the Parish on Thursday mornings at 8.30am

Contact Lynn Smith on 0118 9619393 for details

For Zoom house group on Monday evenings contact Geoff Peck on 0118 9786711

Church Contacts

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