

Woosehill Church Magazine

March – April 2026



**Sharing God's love with the
community**

Follow us on our Facebook page,

Find us on our website woosehillchurch.org

Or follow our livestream services on YouTube

Dear Church family and all other readers,

As I write, there are definite signs of Spring, and when the sun shines on the spring flowers, doesn't it do us all good? It's a time of renewal for our church too as we move forward to a new phase when the JAG club leaves us at the end of the spring term, leaving us with financial challenges, but also an opportunity to consider how we want to present our church to the local community.

With that in mind, we plan to smarten up our building to make it attractive and welcoming to our worshippers, our potential bookings and to all in the wider community who come through the doors.

Dear Father, thank you for the gift of spring and the promise of new life it brings to the earth. As the world emerges from winter's slumber, we pray that you refresh our hearts and spirits. Help us to let go of the old, embrace the new, and trust in your faithfulness.

With blessings, Val

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A Message from our Minister

A good and holy lent...

...starts with good and hole-free pancakes! This year was my first ever pancake party, and it's definitely going on the list of things to repeat, with about twice the number of pancakes. I've always loved Shrove Tuesday and the tradition of sharing pancakes, despite pancakes being a regular breakfast, lunch and dinner food in our house.



If you missed it, then almost 30 of us got together in church to eat pancakes, chat, pancake themed wordsearch and quiz, and to run around with frying pans and paper plates which were the worst pancakes as they were unflippable! I'd love to say it was a conscious choice in case of dropping real pancakes on the carpet, but it was all to do with the actual pancakes being eaten already.

This was then followed by Bible study in church, as opposed to being on Zoom, and the start of our Lent course looking at the letter to the Colossians.

It was a great way to start lent, and then Ash Wednesday was the first time that Wes and I got to take a service together, which felt incredibly special indeed. Wes preached a fantastic sermon on the woman caught in adultery, including the question that seems to go unnoticed – where was the other person, and why wasn't he brought for condemnation too?



Ash Wednesday is a time for turning back to God, remembering that we are mortal, that we are dust, that we all need God's forgiveness and to be reminded that God's love gives us the strength to do what is right and to choose grace. Perhaps then, a picture of Wes and I smiling with our ash crosses seems to go against the solemnness of Ash Wednesday! There aren't many opportunities for us to take services together, so when it does happen, it is a chance to visibly show what our church here in Woosehill is all about, what an LEP is all about. Which, for me, is about showing that we are united in the love of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. That our denominational differences give us something extra, something more than we would have on our own. That the compromises we make are made for the sake of togetherness. That a good and holy lent starts not just with pancakes, but with unity.

As our thoughts start to turn towards Holy Week, I would encourage you to embrace as much as is possible for you to do so. Palm Sunday, 29th March, continues this theme of togetherness as we will have Café Church and get to welcome Elaine back to help lead us in worship. We have something going on every day in Holy Week throughout the parish and if possible, please come along to as much as you can, especially Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Maundy Thursday will be another joint service with both me and Wes, and I'm already looking forward to starting those 3 days, known as the Triduum, together. It can feel intense, it *should* feel intense, and my encouragement is because I know that it is the most important week in the Christian Calendar. It is one of those weeks where the more you put in, the more you will get out of it.

As much as I love Christmas and all the joy and excitement and anticipation, I love lent and Easter more. I love the range of emotions we are made to feel; I love the conflict of pain and victory being held together, grief and hope all merged as one. Because it feels, and is, inherently human. It is our lived experience of everything we go through, and at the end there is the hope of resurrection, the promise that everything will be alright, if not now, then one day. We are shown that death is not the end, that love always wins, because love is stronger than death, always.

If this is perhaps your first Holy Week, or first chance to come along to the services on offer, or the first time in many years that you're wondering about coming, please, please do. Worshipping together is who we are as a church community in Woosehill, and our faith is enriched by one another's presence. May you have a holy and blessed Holy Week and may the promise and joy of Easter be with you all when it comes.

Revd Cara



Mothers' Union Desert Island Discs



The Mothers' Union meeting in March was a very enjoyable one where Fr Sam revealed his choice of discs for a desert island. The gathering was held in St Paul's and the members were joined by a good number from the congregations of our three churches. The opening record chosen was a rousing number, *Jauchzet frohlocket* (Rejoice and celebrate) by Bach and followed by an eclectic variety of pieces, including one Fr Sam specially commissioned to celebrate the 10th anniversary of his ordination last year *Arise and Eat*.

As well as readily accepting to take the Complete Works of Shakespeare and the Bible (I suspect he has a shelf full of those) Fr Sam opted for a Dorothy L Sayers book from the Lord Peter Wimsey series, *Gaudy Night*. His luxury item was a computer which, it was felt, was a bit dubious, unless it came in component parts as a DIY job and not allowed to be used for communication or downloading books. He was also allowed to run this on solar energy as long as he built the panel himself, again from component parts washed up on shore!

Fr Sam spoke eloquently on his reasons for choosing each piece of music, his book and luxury and provided a good hour of entertainment for his audience. The whole event was recorded and is available on the church website:

[Fr Sam's Desert Island Discs | St Paul's Parish](#)

Thank you to Teri Austen for this report on behalf of MU

Prayer-poem from Wild Goose

I am giving you me, Lord
I am giving you me
In the twinkle of my eye
And the sadness of my sighing
In the laughter of my heart
And the tears of my soul
In the rhythms of my feet
And the silence of my listening

I am giving you me Lord
In the promises I keep
And the insults that I pardon
In the good news that I share
And the confidences I protect
In the remembering of gracious things
And the forgetting of forgiven sins

I am giving you me Lord
In the meant song
In the quiet pause
In the special moment
In the nod of my life to your will
And still
I am giving you me
In the stuttered prayer
And the lingering doubt
And the dry days of the spirit
And the contradicted hopes

I am giving you me, Lord.

A Message from our Methodist Minister

Dear Friends,



Easter is at the heart of the Christian story. The resurrection of Jesus enabled people to understand his teaching and death, and to recognize his continuing presence with them.

It brought the Holy Spirit into their lives, empowering them to proclaim good news in the face of apparent defeat. Without Easter there would have been no recollection of the ministry of Jesus, and no sharing of his Good News. With Easter, we have all this and so much more.

Easter is at the heart of our stories. Christ's resurrection gives us confidence in his claim to have come "that they may have life, and have it abundantly." (John 10:10 NRSV) Such life begins with a group of disciples encountering the risen Christ, who are then transformed from a cowardly huddle into an evangelistic team. Like the two who met Jesus on the road to Emmaus, Jesus' followers turned their focus from the sorrow of Jesus' death to the joy of his new life. Life experienced "abundantly" is rooted and bears fruit in the present. It also goes further, to a relationship with the risen and exalted Christ in his kingdom.

Is such abundant life visible in our lives? And, since life involves growth, do we see this life that Jesus has inaugurated spreading in this world? Almost certainly, we shall feel that the answer is "Yes and No": there are signs of life if we look hard enough for them, but we sense that there could and should be more. What needs to be invigorated in our own lives? Not every change needs to be dramatic – with Easter the regular

day of worship moved from Saturday to Sunday, which is hardly earth-shattering – but if our relationship with God seems stale, if our inclination to pray or to worship has declined, if we expect little of life, then we might need to allow the Good News of Easter to stir us up once again. Easter roused a small group of people: now their message has reached every continent.

Wes





News from Tadpoles

We are busy! We continue to welcome lots of local families to our sessions, where friendship and support abound and Sue's craft activities are a major attraction.

This term we have celebrated a number of birthdays – usually with cake! - as well as Mothering Sunday when there was a very special craft and daffodil posies were warmly received by mums, grannies etc Cara is with us whenever she isn't needed elsewhere and is a valued member of the tea

Val, on behalf of the Tadpoles team



National Month of Prayer for Toddler groups

Please pray at this time for our Tadpoles group and all who work to make it so special.

This year we are invited to send in a sheep with the name of our group and its location attached.

All the sheep will be gathered together and taken to parliament where there will be a reception for invited toddler group leaders, MP's and other guests on Monday 1 June.



The theme is
Jesus The Good Shepherd and the
key scripture is John 10 v 14-16

1 2 7 7
make them count

NATIONAL MONTH OF PRAYER for Toddler groups June 2026

Pray for your local toddler group,
its leaders and all the families it
comes into contact with.

For more information, ideas and resources visit the Facebook Group - 1277
www.1277.org.uk/resources

. Pay Attention

God is omnipresent. *Always present, at every moment.*

We don't need to wait for God to 'show up'. What we need to do is open our awareness. Faith, in a way, is therefore merely the practice of paying attention.

That's easier said than done in the age of distraction, when we're encouraged to focus anywhere but the present moment. We can't be distant from God, but we can be distracted from God.

So here is a challenge for you this Lent: pay attention.

Pay attention to yourself. Your depths. Your aches. Your desires. Your tiredness. Your anger. God is in those things.

Pay attention to the world. It really is astonishing. Pay attention to other people. They're all going through something.

Pay attention to hope. It's real. While the news tends to focus our attention only on what's going wrong in the world, there is plenty going right. God is not in a state of dismay; God is moving, working, feeding the great work of restoration.

Always present God, help us to pay attention. To the world. To other people. To ourselves. And, ultimately, to you. Amen

(Gideon Heugh taken from a Lent Devotional for Tearfund a few years ago – reproduced with permission.)

Women of Woosehill – WOW

Our programme for 2026

February	Meal out at the Oakingham Belle	Lynn Smith
March	Cinema trip	Sue Falquero Margaret Kenwick
April	Walk to Walter Arms	Emma Wells
May	Drinks and nibbles in Jane's Garden	Jane Kraft (Help needed to set up and clear away)
June	Strawberry Tea (Fundraiser for Church)	Ruth Smith all to help
July	Pimm's and Nibbles in the garden	Lyn Brown's Garden
August	Dinton Pastures Walk	Linda Hoskins
September	Scrabble evening	Sue Peck
October	Wade's Skittle's Evening	Ruth Smith
November	Pudding Evening	Amy Truluck
December	Floral Decorations	Lynne Paine / Linda Hoskins



News from our overseas church charity

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing."

Matthew 25:35b-36a

Dear friends, As the shadow of escalating war engulfs the Middle East, our Christian partners face renewed danger and displacement in their own lives - but once again they are reaching out to their neighbours with compassion and practical support. In the words of our partner Caritas Jerusalem:

"[we] remain committed to accompanying the most vulnerable, responding to emerging needs on the ground and delivering assistance that protects dignity, strengthens resilience, and offers hope in the midst of adversity."



World Day of Prayer

This year's service was written by the Christian women of Nigeria, hence the green sashes and African prints. It was held at All Saints and really well attended



NO TIME TO PRAY

Many of us will be familiar with the lovely poem printed in our last magazine, aimed at encouraging us to find time each day to pray. As Christians, prayer should be fundamental to our lives, but sadly we all fall short in the midst of our busy and often demanding lives. In John 16 v24 we read “ until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete” I have a feeling God would be delighted to hear from us a bit more!

Our Church is well served by prayer. We are lucky to have a prayer chain serving our urgent or critical prayer needs. I know many will join me in saying how wonderful it is to know that when we are ‘ up against it ‘, we can rely on many others praying for us. We are fortunate too that our weekly intercessions are led by members of our congregation. From my personal experience this isn’t always an easy task but it is a richly rewarding and worthwhile one. We would love to have more Intercessors on our rota so anyone interested? There is a prayer board at the back of Church on which we can pin requests or comments, and it’s worth taking a look because we often display prayers, posters and related topics here. Our little cross provides a prayer corner where you’ll find a candle lit for private prayer on a Sunday morning. Lastly there is our Together in Prayer group , held monthly on Zoom to pray specifically for our Church, its people and its community. There is always a long list of topics to discuss and pray about, and we have had some wonderful answers to our prayers over the years. It goes without saying that all aspects of the prayer life of our Church are treated with the utmost care and confidentiality.

So if all the above sums up how we pray corporately, what about our personal prayer life? All I know is that on days where I haven’t spoken with God about things that are going on in my life, I often feel at odds with everything. Just a few minutes of quiet can make a difference, perhaps whilst I’m walking the dog in the woods or enjoying my first

coffee of the day. And don't forget those all important arrow prayers providing a fast and very real connection to our Lord. Every time I hear or see blue lights flashing and sirens blaring, I try to send a quick prayer for the unfortunate occupants, the paramedics, or the situation they are rushing towards. Just one example of bringing God into the centre of our lives and asking for his help.

None of us will always get it right, finding space and time to pray and finding quiet times to listen to God speaking to us. But let's not set ourselves up to fail by saying in essence 'I don't need Gods help or input'. One of my most frequent prayers is 'Lord I can't do this on my own' and I'm willing to bet it's the same for you! A daily prayer booklet is helpful and there are some lovely ones available from our Quench bookshop. I use UCB notes which are sent out free quarterly and I'm happy to give you those details. As John encourages us, let's make our joy complete by praying more this year, with no better time to start than the highs and lows of Holy Week.

Lyn Brown

Prayer is the bridge between our conscious and unconscious lives...To pray is to connect these two sides of our lives by going to the place God dwells.

-Henri Nouwen



The Parish of St Paul's, Wokingham with
St Nicholas, Emmbrook, Woosehill Church and
Corpus Christi Invite you to

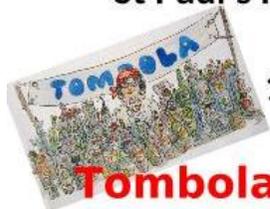


Coffee Morning

St Paul's Parish Rooms, Reading Road,
RG41 1EH

10.45am - 12.45am

Saturday 16th May



Tombola



Plant Stall
Books &



Jigsaw

BRIC A BRAC



Raffle

Tea, Coffee and Cakes
Everyone Welcome

We are again running the book stall at this event. Please offer your help to Val who is coordinating!

Foodbank



UPDATED SHOPPING LIST

- Tinned Cold meat
- Tinned Peas
- Custard
- Tampons
- Anti-Bacterial Cleaner
- Shaving Foam
- Razors



WWW.WOKINGHAM.FOODBANK.ORG.UK

We do not distribute formula milk



Don't forget the Bankthefood app. for up-to-date needs.

Easter Holiday Working Party

9th, 10th & 11th April

Full Day Working Parties

It doesn't matter what you prefer doing, just come along
and we will find a job to suit you



Tea, coffee & cake will be provided

but please bring a packed lunch if you are staying all day.

You can stay for as long as you want and how often you want.

We would love to see you.

Developing faith and prayer

Parish Bible study on Tuesday evenings 7.15 - 8.30pm via Zoom

Together in Prayer on the Third Thursday of the month from 8-9pm via Zoom.

Contact Lyn Brown for details.

Church Contacts

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07812349857

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Rev'd Wes Hampton Methodist Minister
5 Chetwode Close, Wokingham RG40 2LL, 0118 9781756

wesley.hampton@methodist.org.uk

Planning a Wedding, Christening or need to organise a Funeral?

Then please do talk to us.

For more information about any of the above, please email either

Rev'd Cara Smart on woosehillminister@outlook.com

stewards@woosehillchurch.com

Or visit our website www.woosehillchurch.org

What's on at Woosehill Church

Sunday services: 10.00am at the church or online via the Woosehill Church YouTube channel or click on the link on our Facebook page.

Thursday Morning social groups: From 10 am – just turn up

1st, 3rd & 4th Thursday – Free to do any craft activity, jigsaws or puzzles, with refreshments and chat.

2nd Thursday – WoolWAM - a knitting and crochet group.

Saturday Group: Sip and Share

Have you lost someone or are you just wanting company? Then this group is for you. Chat over a cuppa. Every 2nd Saturday at 11.00am. No need to book.

Tadpoles

On Wednesday mornings from 9.00am. Playtime, craft, coffee and snacks for under-fives and their carers. To register for this group, see the website woosehillchurch.org

Deadline for next issue Sunday 17 May 2026

To: valerie.weedon@btinternet.com

Church hire Lynne Paine: treasurer.woosehillchurch@gmail.com

Other information: stewards@woosehillchurch.org



WOOSEHILL CHURCH

SERVICES DURING
HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday, 10am

Cafe Church with pastries & coffee.

Holy Wednesday, 8pm

Reflective Evening Prayer.

Maundy Thursday, 7.30pm

*Holy Communion, joint service with
Rose Street Methodist.*

Good Friday, 2.30pm

Last hour sensory service.

Easter Sunday, 10am

*All Age Holy Communion as we
celebrate the joy of the resurrection.*