

# Woosehill Church Magazine

September - October



Sharing God's love with the community

Find us on our website  
[woosehillchurch.org](http://woosehillchurch.org)  
and on our Facebook page  
Or follow our livestreamed services on  
YouTube



*Dear Church Family and all other readers,*

And so our church is open again, whether you are attending in person or viewing online. Many thanks are due to our technical team for mastering the technology in time for Soba's welcome service and for all who have worked to make the grounds neat and tidy and the church itself Covid-secure. Returning to church feels safe and good but a little unreal as we search for familiar faces behind masks and sit socially distanced in the Sanctuary- many new terms have been added to our vocabulary this year!

Thanks are due to our clergy who have kept us informed and supported in recent months and will continue to do so. Richard has done an amazing job throughout lockdown and as he assured us in his recent service at Woosehill he continues to be our Rector as we also welcome Soba from a different worship tradition into our midst. All shall be well.

Stay safe and God bless,  
*Val*

**Next deadline: 15 November 2020**  
Articles as usual preferably by e-mail to:  
[valerie.weedon@btinternet.com](mailto:valerie.weedon@btinternet.com)

## IN THIS ISSUE

<b>Editor and contents</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Clergy Letter</b> Rev Soba Sinnathamby	<b>3</b>
<b>Light a candle</b> Ian Adams	<b>4</b>
<b>Tadpoles Prayer Circle</b> The Banner Group	<b>5-6</b>
<b>Tales of the Unexpected</b> Ann Pearce	<b>7-8</b>
<b>To make you smile</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Praying for the Middle East</b>	<b>10-11</b>
<b>Lockdown Doves</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Apostolos</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>What is the Methodist District?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Wokingham Foodbank</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Ride and stride</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Making Friends</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>A new way of praying together</b> Lyn Brown	<b>18-19</b>
<b>Bishop Steven's Blog</b>	<b>20-21</b>
<b>Church family News</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Quench Christian Bookshop</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Meetings and Worship</b>	<b>24</b>

## Clergy Letter



Dear friends,

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

It is more than a month now since we came to Woosehill. The time has gone so quickly. Now that almost all the unpacking is done and the house is reasonably organised, we begin to feel at home in our new manse. Nava and I are grateful to you for the hard work you have done to get the manse ready for us and for the warm welcome you have given us, individually as well as a church community. The formal welcome service was so warm and enjoyable.

I am greatly pleased to have taken the first service at Woosehill and being able to meet quite a few of the members. In the coming weeks there will be plenty of opportunities to meet with most of the members of the church community. After several months of limited activity, now I am truly joyful going around the circuit and leading worship and sensing a new beginning.

Nava and I would like to receive you at the manse anytime. Please be assured there is a warm welcome to you always. In the coming weeks I will arrange to visit people if circumstances allow me to.

One of the things I would like to see happening, besides worship and all regular activities, is open conversations with people, in that everyone shares their hopes, dreams and aspirations for the church – in other words, a clear vision for the church. It is not the job of those in leadership alone, but all members and the wider community have a great part to play in this. Conversations help progression.

I believe there is a great time ahead of us. However limiting this present time is, with the help of God we can re-emerge stronger for Christ and discover new possibilities. God who has kept and guide us so far will do even more for us in the future.

My prayer for you is that we all continue to build up on the good work that has been going on in Woosehill all these years.

Once again, Nava and I want to thank you for your love, friendship and welcome.

With my prayers and every blessing,

**Soba Sinnathamby-**

**'Light a Candle (to start a fire)'**

You could take a sledge-hammer to this place.

You could begin to knock it down.

And drag the furniture into the street.

Build a pyre. Pour on petrol.

Then light a great fire.

Stand well back.

And see it burn.

Or you could light a candle.

You could put it in a jar.

And carry it with you to your neighbour.

Ask your neighbour to do the same.

Then move in close.

And find yourself

All flame.

**Ian Adams**

*Read by Cara Smart, 'curate in waiting' at her first service with us on 13 September.  
Cara says:*

It's from his book 'Running over rocks' (<https://canterburypress.hymnsam.co.uk/books/9781848251687/running-over-rocks>) which is a series of poems and reflections for when times are spiritually tough, moving from utter despair to hope and joy, it's very earthy and rooted. I definitely recommend it.



## **The Banner Group Have Been Busy!**

Well the banner group don't just make banners! They have diversified!! In Autumn last year Doreen asked if the group could make a prayer mat for the church's Tadpoles group. Specifically, the chief frog wanted something that the children could sit round and hold to help them sit still during prayers as the end of each Tadpoles session.

As the mat was going to have to form quite a large circle to fit everyone round, (even with some in the middle) we decided to divide the circle into 8 segments so that Banner Group members could work on these at home. This turned out to be an excellent strategy as with the advent of Covid-19 in Spring this year we were unable to meet in the normal way. The design plan was for each segment to depict a bible story. It was left to individual Banner Group members to select a bible story and select an appropriate background colour and segment design. After many, many hours of patient needlework by the team members the prayer mat was completed at the start of September. Doreen expressed delight at the final result but of course Tadpoles are currently not meeting in the normal way.

Take a look at the photograph overleaf. See if you can work out what each of the well-known stories are! Hopefully it will not be too long before Tadpoles get to try it out.

**Thanks to Loretta Kingston, Amanda Parker, Ruth Smith, Sue Riddick and Linda Bottom for helping me to complete this project.**

**Lynne Paine**

*See overleaf for the picture of our lovely new Tadpoles Prayer Circle - one day we will be able to use it!*

*The idea is that the children will stand around holding the outer edge of the circle, and perhaps even in the middle - rather than running excitedly around that lovely wide open space behind them!*

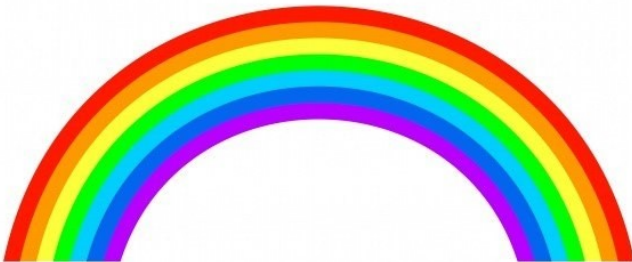
Val



## Tadpoles Prayer Circle



**With thanks from Tadpoles at Woosehill!**



## Tales of the Unexpected and Elephants and Giraffes

Back in May I ordered twenty-five very nice cards with sewing machines on to thank everyone for their contribution to sewing scrubs and making scrubs hats and bags during lockdown.

People may well remember responding to a request sent round the Parish, for sheets for scrubs bags, buttons for mask extenders and cards on which to write encouraging wishes for staff receiving the scrubs.

Five months on and my 'thank you' cards are redundant. The fantastic group of people which has come to be known as 'Wokingham Hub 33' has never stopped sewing and thanks to the amazing fund- raising efforts of eleven year old Noah Evans and his celebrity dad Chris, probably never will!!!

To explain a little: they raised **over £1,250,000!** to fund material for the NHS. This was used initially for scrubs and scrubs hats, then, towards the end of lockdown a wonderful rainbow fabric was commissioned, designed by Liberty designer Tessa Semple. This was designed to specifications laid down by the NHS for hospital use and specific patterns were used to meet the requirements of different departments. The hope was that some staff in every hospital in UK would be presented with a set of rainbow scrubs.

It is a testimony to the enthusiasm and dedication of everyone involved, that not a bit of this fabric has been wasted or used for anyone but an NHS staff member.

The fabric has delighted and uplifted the recipients and our group has been able to present friends and family in the NHS with hats and scrubs bags trimmed with rainbows, as well as producing an array of garments for staff and young patients at the request of local and not so local hospitals.

There has been such a demonstration of love and faith driving our group forward. When supplies of whatever we have needed have dwindled they have been replaced the next day by someone turning up on the doorstep with what is needed. On one occasion, oversized scrubs bags were made by a group member and I hesitated to deliver them to our hub at Ascot only to be told 'Ann they are exactly what we need today!'



When we began to respond to requests in other parts of the UK it was incredible how the means to fulfil these requests just appeared. Money for postage was donated and then the wonderful network of motor bike riders VRUK ( Voluntary Riders UK) offered their services.

There's plenty of work ahead with Frimley NHS Trust needing 20,000 face masks for staff . We are also making pjs for the children's wards and children's theatre gowns.

Look at how the scraps are being used and you'll see how this really has been a tale of the unexpected and elephants and giraffes!!!

**Ann Pearce**





## To make you smile





Remembering and praying for Lebanon and our church charity  
Embrace the Middle East

### **A Franciscan Benediction**

May God bless you with discomfort,  
At easy answers, half-truths,  
and superficial relationships  
So that you may live deep  
within your heart.

May God bless you with anger  
At injustice, oppression,  
and exploitation of people,  
So that you may work for justice,  
freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears,  
To shed for those who suffer pain,  
rejection, hunger and war,  
So that you may reach out your  
hand to comfort them and  
To turn their pain to joy

And may God bless you  
with enough foolishness  
To believe that you can make  
a difference in the world,  
So that you can do what others  
claim cannot be done.  
To bring justice and kindness  
to all our children and the poor.

Amen.

Photographs overleaf by Revd Dr Andrew Ashdown. Lebanon, Palestine, Syria.





## Lockdown Doves

Back in May, as preparation for Pentecost, Richard (or was it Bertie?) asked everyone from St Paul's, St Nicholas and Woosehill congregations to decorate Doves to be hung in St Paul's for Pentecost. A good number of us responded to this request with the Doves suspended upon high, in pairs, in St Paul's. When we started to have services back in church Richard expressed his wish of finding some way of preserving them to remind us of Lockdown both now we are back worshipping in church and also at Pentecost next year. Emails were exchanged between the three parish churches and various ideas discussed.

Cutting a long story short Mary, Liz, Fiona and myself (Lynne) eventually met up in my back garden (socially distanced of course) to divide up the Doves and devise a plan. We decided that each church should create a banner to display the Lockdown Doves. Each church's banner was to be different - but also to be similar! You may find that your dove does not appear in your church, we hadn't thought this far ahead at the start so they were not named but that is really part of it – that fact that we were all together through Lockdown. Woosehill's version of the banner is shown below and will be in position for Richard's service on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September. We will display it for a few weeks and then stow it safely away until next year at Pentecost.

Who knows if Lockdown will be a distant memory or something that will still be with us? A big THANK YOU to Loretta for providing us with all the letters.



## Apostolos

8/9 November 1931 - 22 August 2020



It seems that one or both of Thalia's parents have been on our intercessions almost as long as I have attended Woosehill church and it was a privilege to have them with us on occasions too. Many of us will remember Apostolos' last visit to our church soon after his beloved wife Anna died and the very moving way in which he stood up and spoke to us all. A man of such great faith, I don't think there was a dry eye in church that day!

Apostolos died on 22 August this year, surrounded by his family, ready to join his Lord and Anna. Grateful for his life.

We send our love and prayers to Thalia and family remembering this special man.

Thalia thanks us for our continuous prayer support.

May Apostolos rest in peace and rise in Glory.

**Val Weedon**



# The Methodist Church



## What is the Methodist District?

Those of us who tuned in to Soba's welcome service (or were even there in person) on 8 September will have heard a really excellent sermon by the District Chair Rev Dr David Hinchliffe which drew inspiration from the introduction to Charles Dickens' 'A Tale of Two Cities'

***"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair."***

If you haven't managed to hear it, do try to catch up with it on YouTube, it is a brilliant reflection on what's going on in the world right now.

Although I grew up in a Methodist tradition I wasn't really clear how Districts fitted into the overall structure of the Methodist Church. A District is made up of circuits and as part of the SE District we in Wokingham are apparently the westernmost outpost of an area that extends across Sussex, Surrey and Kent, then out towards the Channel Islands, Gibraltar and Malta!

How privileged we were then to have both David and Bishop Olivia together in our service to welcome Soba and Nava to the Berkshire Surrey Borders circuit and to our own church on Woosehill.

**Val**

<https://youtu.be/ety4K7PW5-o>



## Foodbank current needs



10/09/2020

- **Sugar**
- **Tinned potatoes**
- **Tinned peas**
- **Hot dogs**
- **Meat Pies**
- **Adult Toothbrushes**

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

A **huge** thank you to everyone who continues to support us, we really do appreciate it, and so do the people you help.



## Ride and Stride

Every year, Berkshire's churches have to raise hundreds of thousands of pounds to keep up with repairs and restoration, maintaining these amazing buildings as centres of their communities.

The annual fundraiser for the Berkshire Historic Churches Trust took place on 12 September. The challenge is to cycle, run, drive or walk to as many churches as possible and our own Amanda valiantly took part, cycling to churches around Wokingham and in the process, at last count, raising £340 of her £100 target.



**Well done Amanda!**

The Berkshire Historic Churches Trust was set up in 1984. Its objective is to raise funds to help with the cost of repairs to the fabric of Christian Churches in Berkshire of any denomination.



## Making friends



Meanwhile, down in Acorn Drive, Ron Knights is making friends with the local wildlife. Here he is with his new friend Toby the robin. I love the look of delight on Ron's face!



## A new way of praying together



As you know, our “Together in Prayer” meetings were held monthly in the Church sanctuary. A committed little bunch of us would sit in a circle by our cross, light a candle and pray for our Church and its members, our Parish, and our community as we were led in the Spirit. Then came lockdown.....Oh dear, now what do we do?

Of course, it was imperative that we continued to meet and pray together so I hesitantly set up an online group. Back then, we were all finding our way with new ways of doing things and I was among those unsure of how this virtual stuff all worked. In particular, I felt worried about how praying together could work in this new way - but how wrong I was. I should have known to have the faith to challenge my fears and trust in Gods promises, moving me past a place of being hesitant and unsure. Romans chapter 8 v14 & 15 says “because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear” In other words be bold and just get on with it!

We decided to meet weekly as the need to pray was very great with all that was happening around us. Our first hour together was on April 1st and my notes say we needed to pray for peace and comfort, health and healing, strength, and hope - not necessarily in that order! I was still wondering how this would work but handed over our meeting to God and asked that His Spirit come close. As familiar faces appeared on my iPad screen, it felt so good to be together again. As usual we began with some bible verses and a discussion about our prayer needs, then entered a quiet time as we settled for prayer. At this point, I wobbled - would we all start praying at the same time? Would we be able to sense the Spirit’s leading as we sat in our homes in front of a screen? Oh, ye of little faith, my fears changed to joy as our prayers flowed and our pauses for silent prayer were perfectly timed. Romans 8 v26 says “the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We don’t know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans

that words cannot express “ Well, Zoom was certainly not going to stop the work of the Spirit, He really is the ‘enabler’ - praise be to God.

As the weeks have turned into months, we have decided to return to meeting on the 3rd Thursday of each month, unless an urgent need for joint prayer arises. We will continue on Zoom so anyone who has access to the internet can join us during the dark evenings. Please get in touch with me if you would like to join us ( [lyn@lynbrown.me](mailto:lyn@lynbrown.me) ) and I will give you the pass-words.

I stress the confidential nature of our meetings, so please get in touch if you have a prayer need which perhaps you feel isn't appropriate for our Church prayer chain. I finish with comforting words from Psalm 62 v8:

***“Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.”***

**Lyn Brown**

---

### **Meditation Group**

The meditation group continues to meet monthly.

Meetings will move from 2nd Thursday to 2nd Tuesday, from October onwards, still 1.15 - 1.45 pm. I am hoping we will be able to meet again physically at St Paul's in October, which is very exciting. Given the St. Paul's WIFI, I am planning that those who cannot join us in person will be able to join us through Zoom at the same time.

If anyone is interested in learning more about the group, then please contact me:

[meditationgroup@spauls.org.uk](mailto:meditationgroup@spauls.org.uk)

Or just come along to a meeting. Look out for further details in Richard's parish emails nearer the time.

**Susannah Riley**



*A Presidential Address to the Oxford Diocesan Synod, September 2020 - an edited extract.*

We will be rebuilding and regathering as local church communities and schools and chaplaincies and all their associated ministries and this will take time. We will be playing our part in sustaining villages and towns and cities across our Diocese as disciples as well as hospitals and universities and businesses and civic life. Thank you for all you continue to give in so many ways to this process. I'm deeply appreciative of the many signs of grace I have seen in so many different ways over the last six months. I thank God for you.

We are all aware that we begin this work of rebuilding in a season when we are still learning to live with COVID 19. In the coming months we will be dealing with the aftermath of the first wave of the pandemic: bereavement and ongoing sickness for many; emotional and mental illness for others; the economic effects of lockdown; difficulties in families; the effects on the education and well being of children and young people; and the disproportionate effects on some parts of our communities.

But we begin to regather also knowing that the storm is not yet over. There could well be still further serious disruption to the pattern of our lives, the risks of infection continue, especially for those who have been shielding, normal life cannot be restored in so many ways – and we do not yet know or see clearly whether this phase of living with the virus will last for six months or a year or even longer.

How then should we minister and serve our communities and God's world in this next season, in a world in continuing crisis? How can we play our part as disciples and as citizens and play that part together as part of the Church of Jesus Christ?

We all have wisdom to bring to this process and we will need insight from one other. But my starting point for responding to that question is to draw inspiration and our pattern from the humility and gentleness of Christ. I think these are the qualities we will need as disciples and as the Church in this season.

This is the kind of leadership which draws alongside people, which gathers the fragments, which liberates the gifts of others, which does not overwhelm, which listens and waits patiently to see what is emerging.

This is the leadership we will need to exercise in the coming months as Christian disciples and as the church: the leadership of gentleness and tenderness and patience.

Humility will be key as we offer to support local communities and build up our neighbourhoods; as we draw alongside those in debt or financial difficulty; as we seek to support families in stress; as we reach out to the isolated and bereaved; as we share the purpose and the hope that we have found in Jesus Christ.

There will need to be a great deal of listening as we explore how best to re-open our churches for services of worship safely again and as we also continue with the online services which have sustained us during the lockdown. In many places this will take time. But I do want to offer encouragement to every benefice now to find ways to re-open for physical services of worship in the coming weeks and as we rebuild our sacramental life. I want to offer encouragement to every Christian disciple to reset their rule of life, giving priority to Sunday worship and to make their way back to Church physically as soon as it is safe and possible to do so.

Over the last few months as I have listened across the Diocese, I have found myself returning again and again, surprisingly actually, to the things I learned during the early years of Fresh Expressions. In forming new congregations for those who are outside the Church, the Church emerges and has to be thought through from first principles, in different contexts and places. The heart of pioneer ministry is tending this continuous reflection and development as the new community emerges by the grace of God in a different culture and context.

As the whole Church emerges into a new normal, in which so much is fluid and continuously changing, every ministry is now a pioneer ministry: leading, supporting and forming church in a new cultural context. This takes time and energy and hope. There are many setbacks along the way – but Christ is with us in the journey.

<https://blogs.oxford.anglican.org/>



## Church Family news



We send our very best wishes to Mike and Janet Cole on the occasion of their marriage - a wedding day to remember!

Mike writes:

### **Dear friends at Woosehill Church**

Thank you so much for the generous gift you have given us and for all your prayers for the day and our future together.

The wedding (held at Christ Church Tunbridge Wells) was somewhat unusual in format but actually despite the social distancing, it worked really well.

We had a lovely day, it was a very moving service and the church wardens were kind enough to let us use the church café for a “cut down” reception which involved a packed lunch!





From 1st September, Quench Christian Bookshop at Holme Grange Craft Village Wokingham will be open 6 days a week, Monday - Saturday. Please note that Opening Times will be 10.30am - 3pm. If you need any help outside out of these hours, please email Ali on [admin@quenchshops.com](mailto:admin@quenchshops.com). Thank you for your support over the last few months.

Also, you might be interested to know that we will be getting our Christmas stock in earlier than usual in case of a second wave of Covid-19. If you wish to order Advent Candles, next year's lectionaries etc. please let me know on the above email address asap.





## Woosehill Church Services and meetings

Church services have now resumed at Woosehill as before at 10am each Sunday. Pre-booking is advised and masks should be worn.

To book a place please email: [stewards@woosehillchurch.org](mailto:stewards@woosehillchurch.org)

These services are also livestreamed for those who are still shielding as well as old friends who no longer live in the area. Links should appear weekly on the Website and Facebook pages or via our YouTube link.

We also at present 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

Rev'd Soba Sinnathamby, 23 Sheridan Way RG41 3AP

0118 9894374

[soba.sinnathamby@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:soba.sinnathamby@hotmail.co.uk)

Rev'd Richard Lamey, The Rectory, Holt Lane 0118 3279116

[richard.lamey@spauls.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto:office@stpauls-wokingham.org.uk)

Rev'd Catherine Bowstead, Methodist Superintendent Minister

5 Chetwode Close, Wokingham RG40 2LL 0118 9781756

[minister@wokinghammethodist.org.uk](mailto:minister@wokinghammethodist.org.uk)