

Woosehill Church Magazine



Sharing God's love with the community

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Woosehill Church Magazine

Dear Church family and all other readers,

Welcome to a new phase of life at Woosehill Church with a change of both Anglican and Methodist ministers as we move with our alternating ministry to welcome Cara Smart as our Anglican minister to lead services and provide pastoral support within our church whilst Wes Hampton provides Methodist input alongside his ministry at Wokingham Methodist church – and a new Rector Fr. Sam Tanna-Korn too!

As I indicated in the last magazine, this is a new phase for me as I learn a new format for the magazine after over 20 years of getting comfortable with the old style. Forgive any mistakes as I get to grips with it!

Looking forward to new and exciting times ahead in Woosehill Church.

With every blessing,

Val

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Woosehill Church Magazine
A Message from our Minister

To everyone in Woosehill, welcome! I am absolutely delighted that I get to be your minister here at Woosehill Church. Whether you already come to church, or you're thinking about it, or haven't been for a long time or perhaps ever, please know that you are very welcome and I can't wait to see you and get to know you.



For those who don't yet know me, I have been the curate at St Paul's, St Nicholas and Woosehill since July 2020, meaning that I already know the area well and that this isn't quite a brand-new hello! Before being a curate, I trained for ordination at Ripon College Cuddesdon, as well as being a children's worker for the 6 rural churches where I lived. I'm married to Richard, and we have 2 children and 2 dogs, so you may well see us walking the dogs through the lovely woods and fields that surround us. I love music and play the flute and I'm also learning the cello.

Inclusivity is at the very heart of the Gospel, it's who Jesus is, it's how he taught his disciples and us about who he was, about who God is, and about how we are meant to be. I know from the last 5 years of getting to know Woosehill that the way we are as an ecumenical church, as one that embraces a shared ministry that is both Anglican and Methodist, that we embody Jesus' spirit of inclusivity and welcome. It's one of the many reasons that I am so excited and looking forward to our next 5 years together.

These past 5 years have set us up well, and it means that whilst we could "hit the ground running" in terms of ministry at Woosehill, I'd really rather we didn't! There is something special about taking our time together, about working out who we are as a church, about

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what's important to us and what's important to our local community. Equally important is the need to listen to where God is directing us next, what parts of our church life is God highlighting to us, and who are we missing?

A church is made up of people, all of us different, all of us precious, all of us unique. We come together that we may worship and serve God, and I am so pleased that God has brought us together to do just this in Woosehill.

May you know the love, peace and delight of God with you always.

Cara

HARVEST THANKSGIVING

This year's Harvest Thanksgiving service will be on 28th September, we will again be supporting the Foodbank and Yeldall Manor. Lists of their needs/requests will be circulated nearer the time.





News from Tadpoles

Here we are ready to start a new year, we are just about full and with a range of ages from brand new to almost ready for school.

How special it was to welcome one of our Tadpoles, Linden, into our church family when he was baptised by Cara in a joyful service on 10 August. The church was full, and it was so good to have children taking an active part in the proceedings, especially big sister Fern.

It is a long time since we have celebrated a baptism at Woosehill, so it was a chance to get the banner out and the flowers as always were beautiful. Thank you to Natalie, Danny and family for joining us to make this such a special occasion and bringing that wonderful cake!



After the service we had a lovely thank you message from Linden's mum Natalie:

'We were really touched by the incredibly wonderful personal baptism and service. Our family and friends felt very welcome and comfortable.

Linden was in his element, proudly showing off his new skill of waving to everyone!

Cara did a fantastic job of making the children and big sister Fern feel very included. My young nieces said to me afterwards that they wish their local church was as fun and friendly.

We feel very blessed and fortunate. Thank you so much for welcoming us so warmly and making the day so special.'

Natalie and Danny



A Message from our Methodist Minister



Thank you for the warm welcome to Woosehill Church extended to Cherry and myself. It is good to be with you, and to begin a ministry in the churches and community here. Thank you for your prayers in the lead up to our coming, and for all the practical ways in which you have been preparing for this new chapter in the life of this church.

As you are aware, the services for Fr Sam's induction and Cara's licencing, and for my welcome were just a few days apart. It was good to be part of those occasions and to appreciate how many people were ready to welcome us all and the new beginnings for both the parish and the circuit.

The welcome service included the inauguration of the Blackwater Valley Circuit – which includes the Methodist churches from here to Alton – as both the ministers and the Circuit Stewards were presented and given the assurance of support from the congregation. As if that wasn't enough, our preacher was Rev Conrad Hicks, who was in his very first day as the new Chair of the South East District. At every turn, the service proclaimed that something new is happening.

At the same time, we were reminded of what has already happened, and the mission and reorganisations of the past. If you find a two pound coin in your pocket, and it bears the inscription "Standing on the shoulders of giants", you may get a sense of where we are and how we should think of all this 'newness'. We have not begun a new story, but are turning a page together.

All of this, as our prayers and hymns reminded us, is possible only in the power of God who has called us. We look forward with confidence because we have known God's care and direction bringing us to this point. In the words of Joseph Hart's hymn:

***"We'll praise him for all that is past,
and trust him for all that's to come."***

Wes

Help Needed!

PROJECTOR & AV

We desperately need at least one additional volunteer for each for the projector and AV systems, to allow functional services to be staged. There is a perception that the roles are highly technical, this is not the case, if you can operate a PC or smartphone then you are capable of dealing with the sound and vision systems.

If you are able to help, please contact Ed Smith or Bob Clark



Three lions on a shirt



Being a sports fan who watches England/Great Britain teams can be a very tense and frustrating experience! Having sat through the men's football team falling at the last hurdle in the past few tournaments, the men's rugby team not even showing up at the last World Cup, and several British athletes who were "certain" to win gold in the Paris Olympics last year ending up with wobbly lips and silver/bronze/no medals, we have all been suffering from dangerously high blood pressure and crippling disappointment.

Hang on, though, everything is changing! Depression is changing to excitement, disillusionment to pride! It turns out that all we had to do was support the women's teams instead of the men's, and we could surf on a frothy wave of joy and glory. The Lionesses demonstrated that a winning football mentality comes more from gritty defence (right back Lucy Bronze, whose middle name *literally* is "Tough", played the entire tournament with a fractured tibia), taking your chances when they present themselves, and making clever substitutions, rather than giving endless interviews and advertising grooming products. The Red Roses, England's women's rugby team, have been in blistering form and are red-hot favourites for the World Cup. Our only golden glory on the Paris athletics track last year went to the gorgeous Keely Hodgkinson.

Despite all the success our home-grown female athletes are now enjoying, I am old enough to remember when A Question of Sport, hosted by the smiley David Vine, only featured a female contestant about once a month, and even then, you sometimes couldn't remember if you had ever seen her before. You don't have to be nearly as old to remember a time when every single minister in the

Church of England was male, because women were only ordained as priests from 1994, and it took a further twenty years for the General Synod to agree to having women bishops. (Any Methodists reading this can afford to give a little smug smile at this point, since women were first ordained by the Methodist Conference back in 1974!)

Apparently during World War I there were so few men available to serve as Readers, or Licensed Lay Ministers as we are now called, that the C of E relaxed its rules to allow women to be licensed; they were never referred to as Readers, however, but given the rather fanciful title of "Bishop's Messengers"! After the war the practice was discontinued until 1969, when women were once again welcomed into lay ministry, and now the balance of genders of the 10,000 LLMs in this country is equal. Not so in the Benefice where I now hold my license, where I am outnumbered 2:1 as an LLM and 5:1 on the Ministry Team; however, I count myself extremely fortunate that I never had to deal with a previous member of the Ministry Team, who left shortly before I arrived in the area, who, I am told, utterly refused to acknowledge the ministry of women altogether....

Embarrassing as it is that equality was so late in coming in the Anglican church, much will be forgiven if the next Archbishop of Canterbury, when they are *finally* chosen, is a woman, and the two female possibilities whose names I have heard mentioned recently are certainly very strong candidates with many positive qualities which would make them perfect for the role. By the time this magazine comes out we should be close to hearing whether they have made it to the shortlist; however, given past hesitation, I somehow don't think we should hold our breath, girls!

How fortunate, then, that the appointment that really matters, Minister of Woosehill Church, has gone to a strong and very accomplished Lioness. I'm not sure about her dribbling skills or whether she can drop the shoulder, but I do know that she is very creative in the box and will definitely hold her nerve if it all comes down to a penalty shootout. I wish Cara all the very best as she leads Woosehill on the next stage of its wonderful spiritual journey.

Elaine

SUMMER WORK PARTY

Well, the weather wasn't always like summer, but we achieved a huge amount.

Hopefully you will all notice that there has been a lot of shrub trimming going on, I do believe we have 3 extra car parking spaces at least. Gravel has been added, loos spruced up, carpets cleaned, chairs sorted, some sawn up (Linda is a dab hand with an electric saw), others washed, fridges & freezer defrosted & cleaned, signs washed, emergency lighting replaced, light bulbs in the Sanctuary replaced and so much more.

Altogether a great clean and clear up. So I hope you will join me in saying a huge THANK YOU to all those who helped out whether it was every day, most days or just the odd hours here and there, it all meant that we got so much done.

Lynne

Where have you seen God at work?

Some time ago our lounge door cracked around the top hinge, but was still usable, with care. Early September the hinge screws fell out causing the door to fall, extending the crack down the whole of the door – time for a new door! Before I could leave to buy a new door Alison mentioned tickets were on sale for England Red Roses versus Ireland. An hour later, after we'd bought the tickets I left for Wickes.

Outside of Wickes I met Jeanette, who had gone to Wickes to buy some putty to refit the windows of her summerhouse, however Wickes had none in stock and instead she bought 2m long wooden battens to carry out the repair. Unfortunately, the wood was too long for the taxi Jeanette had ordered and she was having difficulties ordering another taxi. I bought my new door and gave Jeanette a lift home and at that point the story could end, but.....

Was this a lucky coincidence? Maybe, but it required Wickes to have no putty, there to be no larger taxi available, our door to break, for me be delayed going out to buy a new door and for me to go to the same Wickes branch as Jeanette. To me this feels like God at work!

Some of you will remember during PMC (partnership for missional church) I'd regularly ask if anyone had seen God at work. The purpose was to raise awareness of God's presence today (he hadn't left 2,000 years ago!) and to identify opportunities for us to join in with the work God was doing.

PMC took place pre-Covid, so over 5 years ago, so why the reminder now? The quick answer is I don't know. However, Woosehill Church is at the beginning of a journey, we have 3 new Ministers, Cara, Sam and Wes and an urgent need to do something different to ensure the future of Woosehill Church. At the moment I don't think we know where we need to get to or how to get there. So I think God has sent a timely reminder that He's here, He will support us and we should look to see where God is at work in our community to help us understand our future and the possible paths to get there.

So, once again, I ask you all – "Where have you seen God at work?".



Steve

-- And a Message from our new Rector



From the Rectory

My journey of discovery in Wokingham is continuing; it has been good to start getting to know members of the congregations and I am looking forward to meeting many more. Please do continue to help me with your names.

Do please invite me for tea/coffee/food: I'll be delighted to accept *all* invitations. You can email me (rector@spauls.co.uk) or call/text/WhatsApp me ([07440 338056](tel:07440338056)). I would be enormously grateful to hear from you and really look forward to coming to see you.

When a priest is ordained in the Church of England, the bishop reads a long list of all the things you're supposed to be and do. At first you nod along, and then you get a bit worried, and by the end you can only laugh: no one can possibly do all this! But then the bishop turns to you and says, "You cannot bear the weight of this calling in your own strength. Pray earnestly for the gift of the Holy Spirit." It is a crucial reminder that prayer is the heart of the Christian life, and of course public prayer is the heart of the life of a I certainly need prayer, and I want to invite you to pray with me.

Morning Prayer takes place in the parish every weekday (Tuesdays and Fridays in St Paul's at 9am, other days online at 8.30am). I will also be saying Evening Prayer each evening in St Paul's at 5.15pm. If you wish to join me, you will always be most welcome.

But even if you don't come to the public offices of Morning and Evening Prayer, please still pray: for me, for our community, for the world, and for yourselves. You may like to explore the Church of England's daily prayer resources ([online](#), or in [app form on Apple or Android](#)). Or you may find that's not right for you. Could you find a time each day to pray very simply? To hold in your heart all that you need from God? Perhaps to say the words of the Lord's Prayer?

You'll hear a lot more from me on this subject, because the Church, in this and in every place, needs new life, and the only way new life ever comes into the Church's life is through prayer. Please pray for me and know that I am praying for you.

Fr Sam – Rector

-A Prayer

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**



A Pilgrimage to Iona

In 2015 our then minister Patrick King – Paddy - took a group from the parish for a week's pilgrimage to Iona. Alison and Steve celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary and renewed their vows that week so it is remembered fondly by those who were there.

Colin and I were really disappointed to miss it but promised ourselves that the next time he went we would go, but the following year Paddy left for a new life of ministry in Australia, and our hopes were dashed!

Meanwhile as Colin researched his family history around the Weedons of Chesham in the 16th century he was put in touch with an Episcopalian priest living in Virginia in America who seemed to have a connection by marriage with the Weedon family.

The connection grew into a long-distance friendship with Stephen and his wife Jackie; we discovered that Stephen was passionate about Celtic worship and was organising a pilgrimage to Iona in 2025. There were spaces on the trip – and would we like to join them. Yes please!

Iona is a long way away --- we drove to Keswick, leaving our car there; went by bus to Penrith, train to Glasgow where we met up with the American group and thence by bus and two ferries to our destination on the isle of Iona. Whilst most of the group stayed in the Bishop's House, Colin and I and another couple took the softer option and stayed in the hotel St Columba right next to the Abbey. The Abbey building was a warm and comforting presence from every window with the sea lapping the shores of this very special island.

We soon discovered that the services at the Bishop's House followed the Scottish Episcopal liturgy which was not our reason for pilgrimage and developed a pattern of attending morning and evening services at the Abbey amongst those staying at the Abbey itself – as our parish group had done ten years ago. We learnt to arrive ten minutes early for morning

worship at 9am so we could take part in 'holy rehearsal' when we practised the worship songs to be sung in the service. We had expected to be familiar with some of them, but in fact all were new to us.

Our days were spent walking either on the white sand deserted beaches where we were alone apart from the sandpipers and oystercatchers or walking the north and south circuits of the island – surprisingly rough in places! The audio guide to the Abbey was very informative and worthwhile and the craft shops tempting.

We had missed our annual journey to Greenbelt Festival to go on this pilgrimage but felt the same ethos of love and inclusion during our stay on Iona. It is indeed 'a thin place'.

If only the world were like that – let's do our bit to make it so.

Val



Wokingham Foodbank

Current urgent needs:



News from Embrace the Middle East

“I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit.” John 15:5

Dear Friends

It began as a small pilot project in 2021, with no guarantee of success. Now it is a thriving community farm!

Amid the horror and heartache that has engulfed the Middle East for the last two years, there are also stories of hope, encouragement and incredible human achievement. I'm delighted to be able to share one of these with you today.

A few years ago, Embrace funding meant our partner MERATH (Middle East Revive and Thrive) could start a new 'Sustainable Agriculture' project, cultivating previously fallow land owned by a church in an economically deprived area of northern Lebanon. From small beginnings, the farm has gone from strength to strength. This year they are celebrating a bumper harvest – with over 14 tonnes of crops grown. And that's not all! Their dairy has been so successful, they are drawing up ambitious plans to expand.

The farm not only promotes environmentally friendly farming techniques, but produces good quality, organic food that is distributed to vulnerable families struggling to make ends meet. It has also become an important source of employment in the area.

Beth Amphlett- Communications Manager



FAIRTRADE
FOUNDATION

More news from the Fairtrade Foundation

University of Reading

This month we are highlighting the University of Reading for their outstanding commitment to global sustainability and trade justice. The university earned 3 stars at the Fairtrade University Awards award. This recognition highlights the university's impactful efforts to promote ethical consumption and environmental responsibility.



*****We are a Fairtrade Church, committed to serve Fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar – and bananas for our Tadpoles group!**

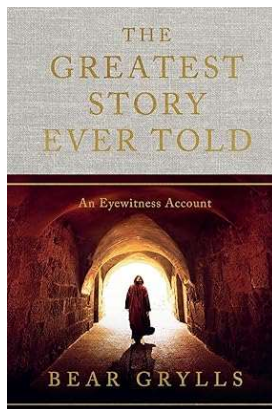
This year, Fairtrade Fortnight falls in September.





News from Quench

Have you got your copy of [The Greatest Story Ever Told](#) yet? This is a beautiful and powerful retelling of the life of Jesus, as seen through the eyes of Mary the Mother of Jesus, Thomas, Simon Peter, John and Mary Magdalene. Written by Bear Grylls, in partnership with Andrew Ollerton, this book has been flying out of the shop. This book is the perfect present to give to family and friends who do not yet know and follow Jesus - so why not get ahead of the game and start your Christmas shopping early, with us?! Currently on offer at **£12.99** (£2 OFF the RRP) with higher discounts available for orders of 10 or more. Why not get together with a group of friends to read it?



Take a Walk ---



What's on at Woosehill Church

Sunday Services – 10:00am at the Church or online

Thursday Mornings at 10:00am - just turn up

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

2nd Thursday – WoolWAM – a Knitting & Crochet group

Table Tennis

On Friday Evenings at
7:30pm

Saturday Group

Sip & 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 and coffee for under-fives and their carers. You must register for this group, please see website.

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 stewards@woosehillchurch.com

Or visit our website www.woosehillchurch.org

Closing Blessing

Wholeness

Grant us, Lord, that balance
of action and stillness,
of work and play
that fits the wholeness you intend for us.
Help us to see that all is prayer;
all things part of life with You

Chris Polhill, from A Pilgrim's Guide to Iona Abbey

Woosehill Meetings and Service Livestreaming

We continue to livestream our 10am service on our Woosehill Church YouTube channel, the link also advertised weekly on our Facebook page, newsletter and website woosehillchurch.org

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 or occasionally at the church.

Contact Lyn Brown for details.

Table tennis

Please note, there will be no table tennis until further notice.

Church Contacts from September

Rev'd Cara Smart, 23 Sheridan Way RG41 3AP, 07812349857
minister@woosehillchurch.org

Rev'd Wes Hampton Methodist Minister
5 Chetwode Close, Wokingham RG40 2LL, 0118 9781756
minister@wokinghammethodist.org.uk

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

Other information: stewards@woosehillchurch.org

Or via the website: woosehillchurch.org