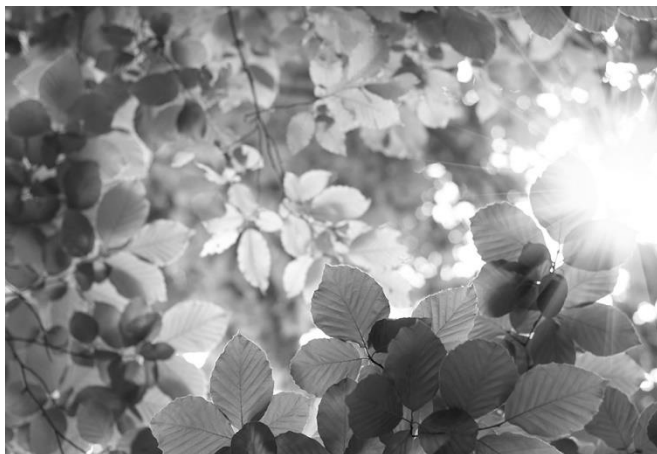




FOREST GROUP
of the United Reformed Church
www.forestgroupurc.co.uk



NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2020

Find us on Facebook



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OUR CHURCHES

Chingford URC

Buxton Road, Chingford, E4 7DP

St James' URC

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Woodford Green URC

High Elms, Woodford Green, Essex, IG8 0UP

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**MATERIAL FOR THE MARCH NEWSLETTER NEEDS TO BE WITH
THE EDITOR BY SUNDAY 23RD FEBRUARY 2020**

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PASTORAL LETTER

Dear friends,



A happy new newsletter to you! Ah, and a happy new year 2020! I am wishing you much love, grace, joy in our Lord, courage for the future and an open heart for all that God may hold for you this year. Stay connected in prayer to the One who stilled the storm, and trust Him to lead you through unfamiliar terrain.

For some of us this year will be quite decisive. For some of us it may seem to be much the same. For some of us this year continues to be the walk into the unknown which already started last year.

For some of us there is great promise. For some there is dread, and fear of loss. I pray that for some of us there will be excitement in how our God may want to use us for His purposes this year – despite or even because of our shortcomings. Let us reach out in prayer to the One who appointed even Peter!

On February 14th there is an annual commercial event which we as Christians have the freedom to ignore (ditch the “couple-terror”, the card/restaurant/red flowers etc).

But we also have the option of using it as a reminder of the importance of LOVE. Love that we need like daily bread to be happy. Love like a seed that God planted into our lives and that yearns to be cultivated and practiced and pampered, because only then it brings forth joy and all the other good things in life: friendship, happiness, the ability to ask for forgiveness and the grace to forgive.



Why not make that day an effort to tell those whom who love that you really do love them, and have a celebration! Invite them for coffee! Have a pizza delivery, decorate your table! We know LOVE has many faces and kinds: let's include especially someone who may feel unloved and who possibly is difficult to love, because they make it difficult for others to love them—maybe we can do on that day what we are supposed to do every day anyway: try and see them with our Lord's loving eyes. Be mindful of the widowed grandmother, the divorced friend and others who live on their own, or of those who are caught in a cycle of poor decisions.

Be thankful in all circumstances. 1 Thessalonians 5:18.

Valentine's Day can be a good reminder of how we have been loved and who has loved us. Let your parents and grandparents know that you are grateful to have them as examples of how to love your own children and spouse. Call your friends to tell them how much you appreciate the love you've shared through laughter, shopping sprees, Harry Potter marathons, and sleepovers. A faithful source of love is precious, and whether it is familial, platonic, or romantic, it has the capacity to inspire, encourage, and heal.

Too often, we ignore the opportunity to share Christ's love through the simplest actions. Our faith sends us into the world to love unconditionally, but if we are not exhibiting that love, how are we going to make disciples in His name?

Ulrike

FOREST GROUP COFFEE MORNING



10.30 am in the Woodford Manse on
Tuesday 4th February

Discussion topic: 'Holy Habits –
Making Disciples'

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

All services commence at 10:30am unless otherwise stated.

Chingford

- 2 Feb Holy Communion - Revd Ulrike Bell (*monthly collection for Water Aid*)
- 9 Feb All-age Worship – Revd Ulrike Bell
- 16 Feb Trevor Cottrell
- 23 Feb Joan Manning
- 29 Feb Saturday 3.00pm Bereavement and Memorial service
- 1 March Holy Communion – Revd Claire Wilson (*monthly collection for Water Aid*)

St. James', Buckhurst Hill

- 2 Feb Holy Communion – Revd Kevin Swaine
(*Sacramental offertory for the Bible Society*)
- 9 Feb Revd June Colley
- 16 Feb Revd Ulrike Bell (*followed by Church meeting*)
- 23 Feb Grace Smith

1 March Holy Communion – Revd Ulrike Bell (*Sacramental offertory for the London Churches Refugee Fund*)

Woodford Green

2 Feb Holy Communion – Terry Silvey (*followed by church meeting*)

9 Feb Gerald Lee

16 Feb Revd June Colley

23 Feb Revd Ulrike Bell

1 March Holy Communion – Revd Kevin Swaine

CHURCH EVENTS

February

Sunday 2 **Chingford** 12 noon Board of Management meeting
St. James' 4.00-6.00pm **Talk on Inter faith**
Pilgrimage by Ulrike Bell in Church Room,
followed by refreshments

Monday 3 **St. James'** 10.30am Holy Habits Group in church rm

- Tuesday 4 **St. James'** 2.00-3.30pm Craft/Prayer Group
Forest Group Coffee Morning 10.30am at the manse
Chingford 1.30-3.00pm Drop in Club for under-5s
and their carers
Woodford Green 7.30pm Elders Meeting
- Thursday 6 **St. James'** 10.30am *End of Life Matters* course led by
Revd Ulrike Bell in the church room
St James' 7.30pm Elders Meeting in church room
- Friday 7 **Chingford** 9.30-12noon Coffee and Chat
Prayers and Bible Study 10.30-11.00
St. James' 1.00-2.00pm Prayer Space
- Tuesday 11 **Holy Habits Group** 10.00am at the home of June
Colley (6 Brook Gardens, Chingford Mount)
Chingford 1.30-3.00pm Drop in Club for under-5s
and their carers
- Thursday 13 **St. James'** 10.30am *End of Life Matters* course led by
Revd Ulrike Bell in the church room
- Friday 14 **Chingford** 9.30-12noon Coffee and Chat
Prayers and Bible Study 10.30-11.00
St. James' 1.00-2.00pm Prayer Space
- Tuesday 18 **Chingford** 1.30-3.00pm Drop in Club for under-5s
and their carers
- Thursday 20 **St. James'** 10.30am *End of Life Matters* course led by
Revd Ulrike Bell in the church room
- Friday 21 **Chingford** 9.30-12noon Coffee and Chat
Prayers and Bible Study 10.30-11.00am
St. James' 1.00-2.00pm Prayer Space

- Tuesday 25 **Chingford** 1.30-3.00pm Drop in Club for under-5s and their carers
- Wednesday 26 **Chingford** 10.30am Monthly service at The Spinney led by Revd Ulrike Bell
Chingford 12noon Lunch Club
- Thursday 27 **St. James'** 10.30am *End of Life Matters* course led by Revd Ulrike Bell in the church room
- Friday 28 **Chingford** 9.30-12noon Coffee and Chat
Prayers and Bible Study 10.30-11.00am
St. James' 1.00-2.00pm Prayer Space
- Saturday 29 **Chingford** 3.00pm Bereavement and Memorial Service

March

- Sunday 1 **Forest Group Council** 1.30pm at Woodford Green
- Monday 2 **St. James'** 10.30am *Holy Habits* Group in church room
St. James' 2.00pm Craft/ Prayer Group
- Tuesday 3 **Forest Group** 9.30am Lent Study Group at St. James'
St. James' 10.30am Fair Trade Coffee Morning
Chingford 1.30-3.00pm Drop in Club for under-5s and their carers
Woodford Grn 7.30pm Elders meeting at the home of Kay Denby

- Thursday 5 **St. James'** 10.30am *End of Life Matters* course led by
Revd Ulrike Bell in the church room
St. James' 7.30pm Elders' Meeting in Church Room
- Friday 6 **Chingford** 9.30-12noon Coffee and Chat
Prayers and Bible Study 10.30-11.00am
St. James' 1.00-2.00pm Prayer Space

HOLY HABITS GROUPS

We are now entering our second year of study in the Holy Habits programme and many groups have already reconvened in January. If you have not taken part over the past year, you would be very welcome to join one of the groups. If you are uncertain about when groups are meeting, please speak to Ulrike or June, who will point you to a convenient group. Most meet during the day, but one group meets on a Sunday afternoon and another in the evening.

THE HOLY LAND

A Spiritual Experience

Sunday February 2nd 2020, 4.00-7.00pm
At St James URC, Palmerston Road, Buckhurst Hill

Featuring:



Rev Ulrike Bell, reporting on her **Interfaith Pilgrimage** to Israel/Palestine (a joint week's spiritual journey with Jews, Muslims and Christians of local/South Woodford congregations plus Rabbi David Hulbert and Imam Dr Mohammed Fahim)

Please RSVP to Ulrike.Bell@btinternet.com

End of Life Matters

**A six-week course on
questions to do with the
End of Life**



For whom? Anyone, any age (we all have to die, face cancer, accidents and see our loved ones die before us...),
People of any religion or none

Where? St James URC, Palmerston Road, Buckhurst Hill

When? **Thursdays 10.30 – 12noon**

30 January	Why talk about death and dying?
6 February	Making a will, lasting power of attorney, financial considerations
13 February	Legacy: The story of my life. How I'd like to be remembered
20 February	Planning my (or someone else's) funeral
27 February	The last days. What happens when we die?
5 March	What comes next? Thoughts on "life after death"

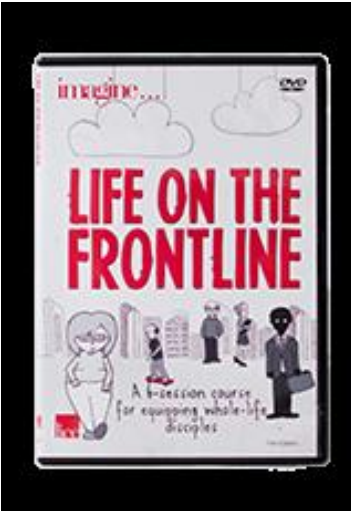
Each session will have a time of information/input (sometimes with guest speakers), a time of exchange and learning from each other, a prayer and a time of sharing cake and tea/coffee.

Please sign up/contact: Revd Ulrike Bell 0208 505 5542

ulrike.bell@btinternet.com

This course is free of charge. Donations welcome.

LENT STUDY COURSE



Jesus said: “Go out into the world and make disciples!”

Come and learn how we (even you and me) can make a difference and learn to be whole-life disciples exactly where God has placed us in our lives.

Tuesdays at St James. All welcome!

March 3 9.30am – 11.00am, followed by Fairtrade Coffee Morning

March 10, 17, 24, 31, April 7 10.30am– 12.00noon

EXTERNAL EVENTS

Westminster College, Cambridge

The Gathering – For All New Expressions of Church

Fri. 17th – Sat. 18th July

Mon. 12th – Tues. 13th August

Life Together – LEPs Today and Tomorrow

Sat. 6th June

with Professor David Ford

To book a place email: admin@westminster.cam.ac.uk

or Tel: 01223 330632

Thames North Learning Programme

Aspiring to More – Pastoral Worship Leading for Lay Preachers

Wednesday February 5th 7.00-9.00pm

Study Day on Saturday 15th February 10.00am-4.00pm

at High Cross URC, Tottenham

For further details contact: training@thamesnorthurc.org.uk

Northern Saints Pilgrimage

The Revd Richard Wyber is leading a small group on a "Northern Saints" pilgrimage organised by McCabe from 6 - 10 July. The group is viable but if anyone from the Forest Group is interested, please contact Richard via Jean. They will be based in Durham and taken by coach to various places.

ARTICLES

REFLECTION:

Holy Habits: Making More Disciples

In the passage the Holy Habits materials is based on in Acts 2:47 we read “And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.” Notice that God is credited with growing the church. This is an important principle. Every time a person becomes a Christian, it is a spiritual miracle performed by God. We may be involved in the process as we tell people about the Lord Jesus, but ultimately, it is God who gives eternal life. Making disciples can sometimes seem daunting, because often people react badly to the attempt. It requires gentleness, patience, kindness, love – all the fruits of the spirit in fact (Galatians 5:22). It is also far too easy to attempt to do it with wrong motivation, and people can spot that a mile off. We should neither be doing it to simply grow our own congregation nor to ease our guilt. Our motivation should be that we believe that our Lord Jesus is the answer to our deepest needs and that we want to share the wonder of His mercy and grace.

We cannot do this on our own. We need God’s help, so knowing our Bibles well is important “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly” (Colossians 3:16), and don’t forget to pray to Him for help. “Apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5)

Kevin Haigh

MOVING STORIES

‘Inspiration’

by Emma Clare Nutbrown Hughes, URC pilgrim to IOPT in 2019



The 2019 URC educational trip to Israel and The Occupied Palestinian Territories was an intense, thought-provoking and moving time. We travelled not just as socio-political observers but as Christians, exploring how our faith might guide

our response to what we saw. We saw and learnt about conflict, inequality and injustice. The trip was also a response to the Palestinian Church leaders’ invitation - issued to Christians across the world - to visit and experience their everyday lives.

Nidal abu Zuluf is the manager of a joint advocacy initiative between the YMCA and YWCA in Bethlehem. The initiative aims to give hope to young people. Many don’t feel safe, have no jobs. They want to live in dignity.



Nidal’s programmes help young people develop leadership skills. About 200 students are invited each year from Europe for

placements. This enables young locals to share with and learn from each other and others.

Nidal said that one million Palestinians have been in prison. He was himself in prison for two years. He was also tortured.

‘As Christians we should stand by the poor, marginalised and displaced. Don’t support us because we are Palestinians, but because we are a people in misery, because of the conditions imposed by others.’

Nidal insisted that Palestinians wanted liberation for the Israelis too, for them to stop violating international law.

‘We love them,’ he told us. “It’s hard for me but we must love them. We are all born in the image of God and are equal in dignity. This is what Christianity means.’

It was called an educational trip and it certainly was. It was inspiring. I am delighted to belong to a church willing to learn, to explore and engage with justice.

Please contact the Synod Office if you want to learn more about the URC’s education trip to IOPT. Thank you for brilliant support for Commitment for Life.

Recipe for a Happy New Year!

By Deborah Ann (1 January 2014)

Contributed by Samantha Roney (Chingford)

Take a cup of Forgiveness,
stir in some of God's grace
then fold it into your heart
and this recipe you'll embrace.

But, you'll need to keep adding,
more ingredients as you go
if you plan on having a year
where Love can rise and grow.

You're going to need Patience,
at least a cup or two . . .
if you want to have Meekness
bubbling up inside of you.

You'll need to slowly blend in,
a heaping spoonful of Goodness
then beat it into the mixture
so you can whip up Gentleness.

Don't forget to add a pinch of Joy,
and as you whisk it into Peace
add a dollop of Faith and Trust

and Hope you will release.

If you live in the Spirit,
you'll need to walk in it too . . .
and if you follow this recipe
it'll produce His fruit in you!

Galatians 5:22-23

*“But the fruit of the Spirit is love,
joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness,
goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance:
against such there is no law.*

A Prayer for Gratitude and Thanksgiving

Lord, Thank you for your amazing power and work in our lives,
thank you for your goodness and for your blessings over us.
Thank you that you are able to bring hope through even the toughest
of times, strengthening us for your purposes.
Thank you for your great love and care.
Thank you for your mercy and grace.
Thank you that you are always with us and will never leave us.
Thank you for your incredible sacrifice so that we might have
freedom and life.
Forgive us for when we don't thank you enough, for who you are, for
all that you do, for all that you've given.

Help us to set our eyes and our hearts on you afresh.
Renew our spirits, fill us with your peace and joy.
We love you and we need you, this day and every day.
We give you praise and thanks, for You alone are worthy!
Amen

crosswalk.com ©

CHINGFORD NEWS

Memories of Betty Clayton 1930-2019



Chingford URC lost probably the longest standing member of its congregation with the passing of Betty Clayton on 30th November 2019. Betty grew up in the Church (then known as Chingford Congregational Church) in the 1930s and 40s, progressing through Sunday School, Brownies and the Youth Club.

It was there that she met Henry and they were married in May 1954, remaining happily together for over 65 years. They lived first in Long Deacon Road and over the next few years were blessed with three daughters, Lindsay, Elizabeth and Fiona, all of whom were baptized at Buxton Road.

Despite having a young and growing family and by now living in Buckhurst Hill Betty volunteered to help with the 5th Chingford Brownies and in no time at all she had become Brown Owl, then continuing to run the pack for so many years that she probably lost count. As well as that Betty somehow managed to find time to take charge of the Beginners Department of the Junior Family Church, planning their activities each Sunday and continuing to teach the children and show them the love of God until just a few weeks before the end of her life.

Tributes paid to Betty described her as “the ultimate people person” and “a pillar of the Church” and the great affection in which she was held was clearly evident on 19th December when the Church at Buxton Road was packed almost to above its capacity for a service of Thanksgiving, with upwards of 150 people of all ages each wishing to pay their respects and share their memories of Betty and the way she had touched their lives.

So numerous were the clubs and societies of which Betty was a member and so many the charities she supported that there is not space here to refer to them all, but to name a few there were various badminton clubs, the Scottish dancing group and Pilots. Also never to

be forgotten are the summer parties Betty and Henry used to hold each year in aid of UNICEF at their house in Queens Road, the back garden of which was so long it seemed to stretch almost all the way to Woodford Green ! More poignantly was her association with CRY (Cardiac Risk in the Young), following the unexpected and untimely loss of her granddaughter Jennifer some years ago.

For her many years of service to the people of Chingford, in particular young people, Betty was awarded the British Empire Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours of 2012. Despite this being an achievement to be proud of she modestly kept very quiet about it.

Notwithstanding her failing health Betty was still active until the end, helping with the arrangements for the forthcoming wedding of her granddaughter Hannah. Susan and I visited her in October, after she had become no longer well enough to attend Church, and it was typical that her main concern that day was to see that someone would be able to cover for her in organising the flowers for Church the following Sunday and the subsequent dates on which it was her turn to be doing that task. Even in her final days Betty was still interested to hear news of the goings on at Church, and particularly things involving the young people.

If one was to try summing up Betty's life and work it would be to say that she was patient, helpful and kind, bringing joy to so many people, and was strong in service to Christ.

Duncan Creevy

The money raised at Betty's funeral and since, amounted to £953, which was donated to 'Cry' (Cardiac Risk in the Young) in memory of her grand-daughter Jennifer. Henry and his family would like to thank everybody who donated so generously. The money will be used by Cry to screen young people for undiagnosed heart conditions which occur in twelve cases a week throughout the country.

ST JAMES' NEWS

CAROL SINGING 2019

On the afternoon of December 6th, a small group of us from St. James' sang carols for half an hour in Queens' Road, Buckhurst Hill, as part of the Christmas Festival there. Geoff Packe accompanied us on the mandolin, so hopefully we made a joyful noise! We gave out some leaflets about Christmas services and events at St. James' to passers-by in between singing, so we felt it had been worthwhile.

On December 19th, eight of us went to Woodford Station, in the evening, and sang carols for about one hour to the people coming and going there, with Geoff playing for us again on the mandolin. We were collecting for the Redbridge Single Homeless Project and we raised £360, which was £145 more than last year.

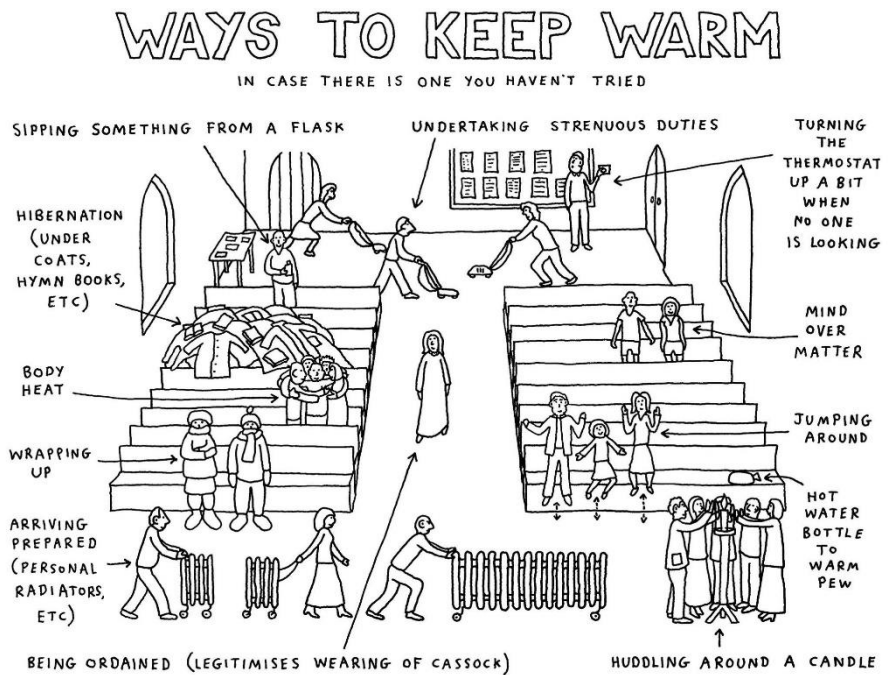
Thank you very much to everyone who turned up to help, at such a busy time of year, and especially to our musician, Geoff. Thanks also to Louise and Simon who counted all the money.

Isabel Bala



WOODFORD GREEN NEWS

JUST A BIT OF FUN!!!



CartoonChurch.com

DIRECTORY

CHINGFORD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Buxton Road, Chingford, E4 7DP

www.chingfordurc.org.uk

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TREASURER	Eileen Wallace	Tel: 8524 2270
NEWSLETTER		
CONTACT	Pat Morris	Tel: 8529 6776

REGULAR EVENTS

Sunday	10.30 am	Morning Worship with Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month Junior Family Church (from age 3) and Questers	Tel: 8524 2491
Tuesday	1.30–3.00 pm	Club for Under 5s and Carers (Term time only)	Tel: 8529 0071
	7.00–8.30 pm	27 th Chingford Cubs	Tel: 8524 2491
	7.00–8.30 pm	27 th Chingford Scouts	Tel: 8524 2491
Wednesday	12 noon	Lunch Club: £4.50 meal (last in month)	Tel: 8529 0441
Thursday	5.45–7.15 pm	5 th Chingford Brownies	Tel: 8529 1475
	7.30–9.00 pm	5 th Chingford Guides	Tel: 8529 4420
Friday	9.30–12 noon	Coffee and Chat	Tel: 8529 0441
	10.30–11.00 am	Prayer Group	Tel: 8524 2491

ST. JAMES' UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Palmerston Road, Buckhurst Hill, Essex IG9 5NG

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HALL MANAGER

Gerald Lee Tel: 8505 0300
geraldelee@ymail.com
Hall bookings: bookstjames@outlook.com

REGULAR EVENTS

Sunday	10.30 am Morning Worship (with Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month)	
Monday	2.00-3.30pm Craft/Prayer Group on the first Monday each month	
	5.30 pm 2 nd Buckhurst Hill Brownies	8508 7546
	7.00 pm 2 nd Buckhurst Hill Guides	8508 3480
Wednesday	7.00 pm Sing Emmanuel Choir	
Thursday	6.00-7.00 pm 28 th Epping Forest Beavers	07960309175
	6.30-8.00 pm 28 th Epping Forest Cubs	8504 5270
	7.30-9.00 pm 28 th Epping Forest Scouts	07896031718
Friday	1.00-2.00pm Prayer Space in the church room	

WOODFORD GREEN
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
High Elms, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0UP

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NEWSLETTER CONTACT
Revd June Colley

Tel: 8529 5403
rev@jcolley.plus.com

REGULAR EVENTS

Sunday	10.30am	Morning Worship and Junior Church (with Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month)
Tuesday	6.00-7.30pm	14 th Woodford Brownie Pack (aged 7-10)
Thursday	7.00-9.00pm	14 th Woodford Guide Company (age 10-14)
Friday	9.00-10.30am	Play Café for toddlers and babies with their parents and carers
	6.00-7.30pm	PILOTS (a non-uniformed Christian group for children aged 4-11 years)

RAY LODGE SITE

Ray Lodge Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 7NX

Enquiries to Church Secretary at Woodford Green URC.

Caretaker Mr. Peter Pitt 07940 725344

REGULAR EVENTS

Tuesday 6.00 – 7.00 pm 7th Woodford Rainbow Unit
(age 5 – 7)

Wednesday 6.15 – 7.45 pm 16th Woodford Brownie Pack
(age 7 – 10)

The premises are also used by the Seventh Day Adventist Church on Saturdays for Sabbath Worship and Wednesday evenings for Prayer Meetings, and by Faith Ministries (UK Churches) on Sunday mornings.

AND FINALLY ...

God's Voice Mail

Ada Smith, Ossett, West Yorkshire

We have all learned to live with automated telephone response as a necessary part of modern life, but have you wondered what if God decided to install voice mail? Imagine praying and hearing this:

Thank you for calling My Father's House. Please select one of the following options:

Press 1 for requests

Press 2 for thanksgiving

Press 3 for complaints

Press 4 for all other enquiries

What if God used the familiar excuse: *I'm sorry, all of our angels are busy helping others right now. However, your prayer is important to us and will be answered in the order in which it was received, so please stay on the line.*

or: *Our computers show that you have already prayed once today. Please hang up and try again tomorrow.*

or: *This office is closed for the weekend in observance of a religious holiday. Please call again Monday after 9.00am. If you need emergency assistance, please contact your local church.*

Thankfully, God doesn't have voice mail and He listens when we pray!

(Contributed by Sheila Tanner: St. James')