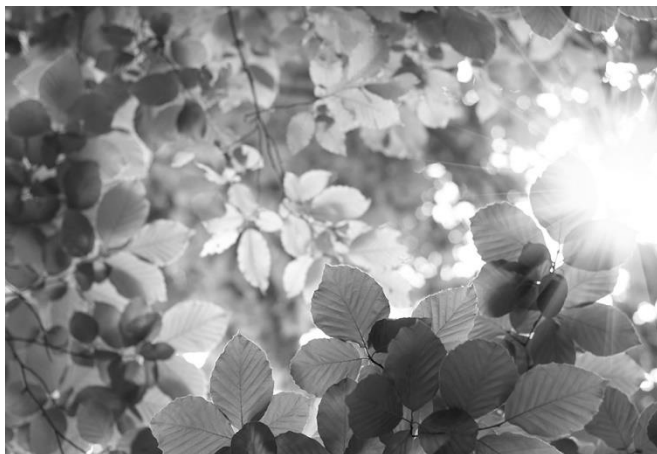




FOREST GROUP
of the United Reformed Church
www.forestgroupurc.co.uk



NEWSLETTER APRIL 2019

Find us on Facebook



MINISTER

Rev Ulrike Bell 127 Monkams Avenue Woodford Green Essex IG8 0ER
Tel: 020 8505 5542 Ulrike.bell@btinternet.com

OUR CHURCHES

Chingford URC

Buxton Road, Chingford, E4 7DP

St James' URC

Palmerston Road, Buckhurst Hill, Essex, IG9 5NG

Woodford Green URC

High Elms, Woodford Green, Essex, IG8 0UP

Newsletter Editor: Rev June Colley

Tel: 020 8529 5403 | Email: rev@jcolley.plus.com

**MATERIAL FOR THE MARCH NEWSLETTER NEEDS TO BE WITH
THE EDITOR BY SUNDAY 21st APRIL**

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PASTORAL LETTER

Dear friends,

Why go along with Holy Week? Why would it be really good to follow Jesus into the chaos and pain of his last days on earth? Why would we do that?



It's not "fun" (or is it? Palm Sunday might still be ok; some churches use a donkey!). It would be a lot nicer to just leave that whole week out and skip over to eggs and Easter.

Problem though is that the bit before Easter is actually pretty fundamental to followers of Jesus. Without at least scratching on the deep emotions and experiences of desolation that Jesus (and his disciples) must have gone through, our Easter joy will not be too profound. And if our Easter joy is not too profound, maybe that's a sign that our faith might not be too deep either. So maybe it would be a good idea to go along with what the churches offer, and see if some of it touches our heart and connects us to our real-time life experiences here? Which in turn would bring God a lot closer to our senses and make him/her somewhat more real.

Palm Sunday has a great deal to do with the psychology of masses, with their wish to idolise but then to turn around and claim the opposite, if influenced that way. Where are we in that crowd?

Maundy Thursday is the Quiet Day at St James – a good opportunity to take time out and reflect, whilst being safe from having to talk... And the joint evening service at Chingford Methodist Church, where

Jesus' Last Supper will be remembered, where some disciples will share their thoughts and memories in meditations and where some feet (or hands) may be washed. Can we allow ourselves to be served that way?

Some churches have a wake through the night into Good Friday, they watch and pray with Jesus and the disciples (who, of course, nodded off...). If you can find a church that follows this ancient tradition – this would be a very deep experience of a different kind, lonely, probably, and yet connected. Maybe see if you can find someone who has ever done this sort of prayer.

And Good Friday: quiet and probably evocative morning meditations in our churches, followed by the walk of witness in Chingford, this year on the road, carrying the cross publicly, handing our Easter eggs with little Easter greeting notes to people in shops and streets. Then a short act of worship on Chingford Green. How does it feel like to show up to this and publicly be associated with that Jesus of Nazareth?

The Saturday can feel quite empty after all this. It's time of waiting. Time in limbo. Hushed Easter preparations, getting everything ready for the big day.

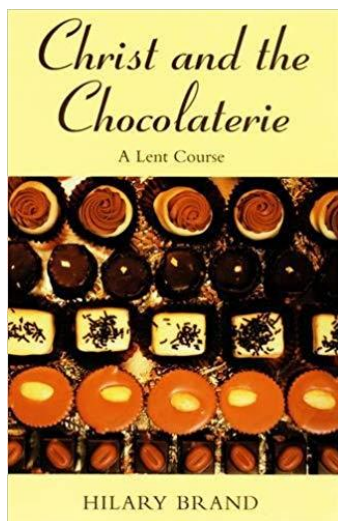
Whoever can, do go and find a church which celebrates the Easter Vigil: A worship often starting at 3am in darkness, Easter fire in front of the church. It is such an experience: in the liturgy being carried through from the creation of the earth (darkness) to the making of humans and the first sin (apple, disobedience) through the history of Israel and her prophets to the birth of Jesus, then his death and finally, with the arrival of the Easter light from the outdoors fire, the

spreading of light to all candles, and an immense awe and joy goes round. The victory of life over death, of light over darkness, of love over hatred is thoroughly celebrated, sung, admired, proclaimed. Then Eucharist and breakfast.

Our reformed Easter Sunday is a bit of a slimmed version of this. We do it in a non-conformist-way, the other way around: breakfast, Communion, worship. What matters is the joy. What matters is the deep laughter, the relieved giggle that life has triumphed over death. This is soul food, our core; Jesus lives, God loves his world, and we have experienced it! We are experiencing it, it flows on from us to others.

I really hope and pray you go to worship this Holy Week – if not here, then wherever you are.

Yours, in Christ, Ulrike



**FOREST GROUP
LENT COURSE
at St. James' URC**

Pick and choose the times that suit you.

Info: Rev Ulrike Bell 0208 505 5542

ulrike.bell@btinternet.com

Wednesdays 11.00 – 12.30pm

Thursdays 6.30-8.00pm

April 3rd & 4th

April 10th & 11th

April 17th & 18th

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

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

Chingford

- 7 April Holy Communion – Revd Ulrike Bell (*Collection for Easter Gift Day*)
- 14 April Palm Sunday All Age Service - Joan Manning
(*preceded by blessing of Palms on Chingford Green*)
- 18 April Maundy Thursday 7.00pm Joint service at North Chingford Methodist Church
- 19 April Good Friday Meditation 10am - Revd Ulrike Bell
(*Followed by Chingford Churches Walk of Witness at 11am from near the Railway Station to the Green, concluding with a short service*)
- 21 April Easter Breakfast 8.00am
Easter Sunday All-age Celebration - Revd Ulrike Bell
- 28 April Revd Claire Wilson (*followed by church meeting*)
- 5 May Holy Communion – Revd Kevin Swaine
(*Monthly Collection for Christian Aid*)

St. James', Buckhurst Hill

- 7 April Holy Communion – Revd Kevin Swaine
(*Sacramental offertory for the Camden Centre*)
- 14 April Revd Ulrike Bell
- 19 April Good Friday Meditation 11.00am in the church room

- 21 April 8.00am Easter Breakfast at Chingford URC
Easter Sunday Service at Chingford URC
*(No morning service at St. James' apart from R.C.
Mass at 9am)*
- 28 April Revd June Colley *(followed by church meeting)*
- 5 May Holy Communion – Revd Kevin Swaine
(Sacramental offertory for the Leprosy Mission)

Woodford Green

- 7 April Holy Communion – Jean Wyber/Revd June Colley
(followed by church meeting)
- 14 April Mona Shahbaz
4.00pm Messy Church
- 19 April 10.30am Meditation: Words & Music for Good
Friday
- 21 April Holy Communion Easter Sunday - Revd June
Colley
- 28 April To be confirmed



FOREST GROUP COFFEE MORNING

10.30 am in the Woodford Manse on
Tuesday 2nd April

Topic: 'Holy Habits - Prayer'

CHURCH EVENTS

April

- Monday 1 **St. James'** 2.00-3.30pm Craft/Prayer Group in church room
- Tuesday 2 **Forest Group** Coffee morning at the manse
 St. James' 7.30pm Elders Meeting in church room
 Woodford Grn 8.00pm Elders Meeting at the manse
- Wednesday 3 **St. James'** 11.00am **Forest Group** Lent Study in the church room
- Thursday 4 **Woodford Green** 9.00am Easter Experience with primary school classes
 St. James' 6.30pm **Forest Group** Lent Study in the church room
 Chingford 7.30pm Youth Council
- Monday 8 **Chingford Churches** 10.00am Board of Management
 Woodford Green 2.30pm Jubilee Club: Ancient Rome with June Colley
- Saturday 13 **Chingford** 6.00pm *Narnia* film
- Thursday 18 **Forest Group Quiet Day** 10.30am – 3.00pm at St. James'
- Wednesday 24 **Chingford** 12.00noon Lunch Club
- Thursday 25 **Chingford** 8.00pm Elders

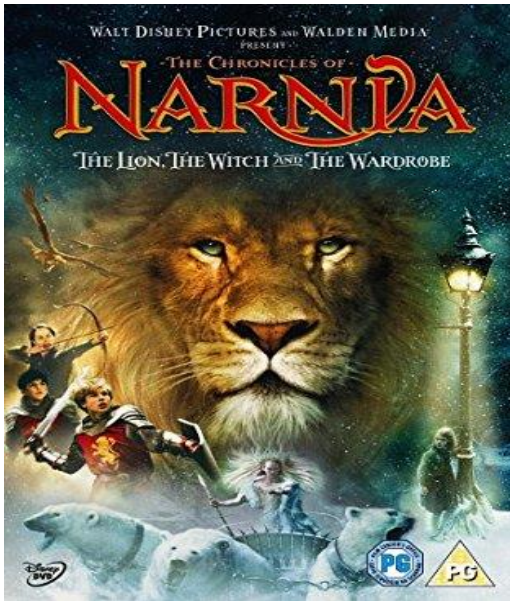
May

- Thursday 2 **St. James'** 7.30pm Elders Meeting in church room
- Sunday 5 **Forest Group Holy Habits Review** 12.30pm at Woodford Green
 Forest Group Council 2.00pm at Woodford Green
- Tuesday 7 **Forest Group** Coffee morning at the manse
 Woodford Grn 8.00pm Elders meeting at the manse

HOLY HABITS GROUPS

<u>Group 1</u> To be arranged	<u>Group 2</u> Tuesday 9 th April 10.00am. June Colley (Host & Facilitator) 020 8529 5403 rev@jcolley.plus.com
<u>Group 3</u> Wednesday 17 th April 10.00am Audrey Mendham (Host) Jean Wyber (Facilitator) 020 8504 2447 jeanwyber@aol.com	<u>Group 4</u> To be arranged Sandra Millan (Host & Facilitator) 020 8529 0071 sandramillan@virginmedia.com
<u>Group 5</u> Tuesday 9 th April 7.30pm Eileen & Geoff Packe (Host) 020 85049188 geoff.packe22@gmail.com Margaret Brown (Facilitator) 020 8524 5223 mptbrown@btinternet.com	<u>Group 6</u> Monday 8 th April 10.30 am Gerald & Mariana Lee (Host) St James URC, Buckhurst Hill geraldelee@ymail.com Isabel Bala (Facilitator) 020 8504 3543 isabelbala@hotmail.co.uk
<u>Group 7</u> To be arranged Heather Nicholaou (Host & Facilitator) 020 8529 9280 heathernicholaou@gmail.com	<u>Group 8</u> 28th April at 5.00-6.30pm Helen and Kevin Haigh (Host & Facilitators) 0208 524 8003 hhaigh@gmail.com

FILM NIGHT FOR ALL THE FAMILY!



C.S. Lewis' timeless adventure The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe on screen.

We'll watch together and wonder afterwards about parallels to the Easter story, how C.S.Lewis (and this film) managed to tell it in such a different way.

Saturday 13th April, 6.00pm at Chingford URC

Come with popcorn // your favourite drinks and munch

Bring your friends!

EXTERNAL EVENTS

Westminster College , Cambridge

Introduction to the Old Testament

8th - 13th April

To book a place email: admin@westminster.cam.ac.uk
or Tel: 01223 330632

London Inter Faith Centre, 125 Salusbury Road, NW6 6RG

Abrahamic Text Group

May 13th 10.15am -12.30pm

Info: laurance.hille@londoninterfaith.org.uk

Cockfosters Centre for Spirituality, 29 Bramley Road, Oakwood N144HE

Cockfosters Spirituality Open Day

13th April 10.00am-2.00pm

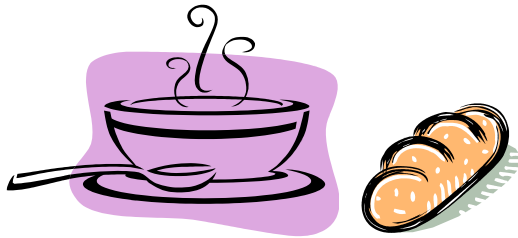
Music evening with Rodney Newton

An illustrated talk about the use of music in Christian Worship from the earliest times to the present day.

1st May 7.00pm -9.00pm

To book a place email: cockfosters@rcdow.org.uk
or telephone: 020 84496648

LENT LUNCHES



HOME MADE SOUP AND FRENCH BREAD

£3.00

**THE BECKET CENTRE
ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**

TUESDAYS IN LENT

12.15PM – 1.30PM

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

***In aid of*
MARY'S MEALS**

An organisation that provides meals for school children in crisis-stricken countries. 93p of every £1 goes to charitable activities. It costs £13.90 to feed a child for a year.

You can also purchase a book of the recipes used by the various cooks – only £5 (in aid of Mary's Meals)

Jean Wyber has copies

ARTICLES

REFLECTION: PREDESTINATION

There are a number of paradoxical ideas in the bible, which have caused considerable head-scratching for Christians, for example, the idea that God is one God and three persons and that Jesus was both fully human and fully divine.

Throughout the Bible, there are a number of indications that God is fully in control of everything that happens, and that therefore, God chooses which of us will be Christians, and which of us will not. At the same time, we also see a strong emphasis on the importance of our choices and that we will be held responsible for our actions. So, which is true? Since both ideas are clearly expressed, we must hold these two, apparently contradictory truths, in tension with each other. If we do not, we miss out on important implications that are vital to our faith.

In Exodus during the plagues, we sometimes read that Pharaoh hardened his heart e.g. Exodus 8:15,32 and sometimes we read that God hardened Pharaoh's heart e.g. Exodus 9:12,10:20. In Job chapter 1, we are told that Satan has to ask permission of God to inflict suffering on Job. In Matthew 10:29, we read "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father". In Romans 8:29-30 we read "For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified."

For me, this is comforting, because, it tells me that if I am truly a Christian, there is nothing that can change that fact, and God will keep me spiritually safe, even though I get things wrong, so often and in so many ways.

Kevin Haigh

IT'S ALL ROCK 'N' ROLL TO ME

It was probably the unusual title that first attracted me to sign up for this 24-hour retreat - and as it was at the Royal Foundation of St.Katherine in Limehouse (www.rfsk.org.uk) I knew it would be interesting.

The retreat was led by Ivor Moody who is a Dean at Chelmsford Cathedral and very interested in the potential link between secular music and “the sacred”. It is Ivor’s belief that there is a very deep meaning in many popular songs that we as Christians often miss.

For this retreat Ivor developed an extended reflection/meditation on the Emmaus Road story, using well known popular songs as markers to illustrate various aspects of the story. We began to read the story of Cleopas and a companion walking deep in sorrow and confusion away from Jerusalem, not really listening to the questions the stranger was asking them about recent events in Jerusalem, so bound up were they in their bereavement. Who would have thought “Don’t let me be misunderstood” sung by Nina Simone would have echoed so much of that conversation? We then worked through a total of six songs, including “Message in a Bottle”, “Blowing in the Wind” and finally “Let it Be” before we ended this really insightful meditative study 24 hours later? Within our own prayer and quiet time we were asked to draw our own Emmaus Road, charting the highs and lows of

our own faith journey and at a final Eucharist we laid our papers alongside each other, showing the uniqueness as well as the similarities of our own journeys. Seeing that road stretched out across the beautiful Chapel was a special, serene moment for us all.

Ivor has written a book “Songs for the Soul” which can be used as a six week course- possibly next Lent? Margaret Minoletti

NEWS FROM AMERICA

We were sorry to hear of the death on 4th March of Roger Heimer who was minister of Trinity Walthamstow URC. He and his wife, Nancy, were well known to the churches in the Forest Group. We all remember Nancy in particular as she was always a welcome visitor to our churches to lead worship during the 1990s. Nancy continues to live in America.

TRAIDCRAFT NEWS

Traidcraft was established 40 years ago in 1979 and it was the pioneer of Fairtrade. Its slogan of “Fighting poverty through trade” gave it its mission of seeking out small producers and helping them develop better production methods and ensuring they had a fair price for their products.

We tend to forget that Traidcraft is a business and though never intending to make large profits, by last summer, like so many other commercial companies, its losses were so great that it was decided that Traidcraft would cease trading. This news caused such dismay

among its many Fair traders and supporters that a new business model was worked out to see if this could save the company. As a first step it involved reducing its staff from 64 to 12; selling their warehouse and offices in Gateshead and having a sale of all their craft goods.

In its new form Traidcraft will sell mainly food products and only those craft items which have already been purchased by another fairtrading company. This will cut out transportation costs and the losses which are made when craft goods bought are imperfect and not suitable for sale. However, this meant that Traidcraft could no longer buy directly from its small producers, which was a devastating blow for all concerned. New outlets have now been found for most of these small producers and this process continues.

Traidcraft's new business model is based on a transparent trading system which means that the buyer will know where each of the ingredients or materials used in the product comes from and that at each step of production a fair price was paid. Just as Traidcraft was a pioneer of Fairtrade it is now intending to be a pioneer of this new business model.

Traidcraft has not abandoned its original mission to help small producers. This work is still carried out by Traidcraft Exchange, which is the fundraising arm of Traidcraft though financially quite separate from the business. It will still continue to help small producers and help them find new outlets for their products.

THAMES NORTH SYNOD

16 March 2019

Synod Moderator's Opening Remarks

Four years ago, in March 2015, the synod saw a vision of our local churches as “*vibrant and relevant, purposely engaged in God’s mission*”. Most of our churches are, which we celebrate. We continue to support the churches striving to be effective in mission.

In the same year, we chose Discipleship to be our primary mission- *to grow as disciples and make new disciples*. However, the first step is to regain confidence in our faith narrative. Discipleship is radical because it requires change, first within us. A good disciple is more alert to the world and its needs.

Bishop Newbiggin wrote, “*The only effective hermeneutic of the gospel is the life of a congregation which believes it*” (The Gospel in a Pluralist Society, 1989).

Mark Greene said that the whole life discipleship is an *intentional* activity. We must be intentional about teaching faith and how to apply our faith in life.

My experience of visiting churches and meeting people in the last few months tells a beautiful narrative. I returned home from visits with amazement. How our churches live out their calling, irrespective of their size, strength or resources and continue to engage with God’s narrative.

For example, St Andrew’s Borehamwood celebrated its 60th anniversary on 10th Nov 2018 at the same time announcing a merger with Chesterfield Road, Barnet. The church was packed, and people had travelled from long distances. They gave testimony of how their lives had been touched and changed for the good by being part of St Andrew’s. A building may close, but the church would continue

because the people are the Church, and they have been spread out widely. The church had successfully created a ripple effect.

I attended the retirement services of two ministers: David Bradburn and Elizabeth Welch. I heard incredible appreciation of their ministry. People spoke of how they were personally touched by these ministers' ministries, things that the ministers were often unaware of. Servants of God retire but their labour has not been in vain. Their ministry has left evidence of transforming lives.

I went out with a little hope; I returned filled with hope.

Brexit, the Mexican border, wars, the greenhouse effect, selfish and greedy nations! We live in a wounded world; a spiritually depraved world. We often forget that our planet is our life and our future is bound up with one another.

People seek answers in yoga, self-declared gurus, organic food, cotton clothing, gym, recycling, cleaning the ocean and so on. There is a desire and need for peace, contentment and joy.

What hope can the Church bring in this context?

Do we have faith in our Christian narrative? This is an era of narratives, not doctrines. God's Kingdom is God's narrative. We join in and lose ourselves in it. Our identities or denominations aren't important. Because it is God's narrative.

But the Christian presence in our villages and towns makes sense. In the URC, we usually close a church where there is no congregation left, but I am pleased to say we have taken a different step this time, in faith. Totteridge Union would have closed last summer. But now it has a mission project to *replant a congregation there*- with support from 2 local area groups, Trinity, Harrow and the synod.

I have noticed a trend in recent years in our synod of large-scale projects, whether building or mission. We currently have a few multi-

million-pound church building projects and mission projects of tens of thousands of pounds, which involve paid staff. Larger congregations can pull together large projects and that is good.

However, most of our churches are small, with membership below 40. They do not have the capacity or pool of skills to engage in large scale projects. However, we should not lose the notion of small initiatives, small steps, small-scale impact. These small churches would engage in projects which are relatively small and manageable and thereby make a difference. Issues like climate change, food banks, fair trade or care for the elderly are massive. A small step, if taken by many, will make a difference. We should consider creating a fund focused on small-scale mission or social activities, such as a little support towards a drop-in centre, coffee mornings, language study and so on!

Little drops of water make a mighty ocean.

Rev Dr Andrew Prasad

SYNOD REPORT

The Synod was held at Chingford URC, and our Minister, Revd. Ulrike Bell led the Opening Worship and gave a short presentation about the Forest Group of Churches and its mission. After that, we sang the *Forest Group Hymn*, which Anne Sardeson wrote for us some years ago.

Revd Frances Ackroyd was one of two long-serving ministers who were presented with certificates to commemorate 50 years since their ordination. A message had been received from a minister in Christchurch, New Zealand, where the recent attacks on two mosques

had taken place in which forty-nine people were killed. They will be remembered in our prayers.

The 2019 Synod Year Book had recently been published. Copies had been given to church secretaries.

Alan Yates, a previous Moderator of General Assembly, then gave a talk on his *Visions of the Future* – a ten year forecast about the URC. He predicted membership would shrink by 45% and the number of ministers by 55%. There would only be four Synods and the average size of congregations would be twenty-four. Ministers would have to struggle to look after around seven churches each. He believes that we should spend more on people, with more missionary and community workers, following the Gospel message of going out and making disciples. We should centralise and spend our wealth. We might not grow in numbers but we will have followed Jesus' teaching. We are not a poor church but we behave as if we are. We should pray and be bold. Youth outreach and evangelism were important. The moderator said that Mr Yates' talk had been inspirational and challenging.

Reports from Synod Committees. James Fields reported from the Pastoral Committee, saying that we have a duty of care to others and ourselves. Bullying within the church was unacceptable and safeguarding was essential. James Wise from the Resources Committee said Synod grants for training would be considered sympathetically and guidance for applying for Synod Grants could be obtained from the URC website.

Jim Dalglish gave a report on *Walking the Way - Whole Life Discipleship*, which churches have been encouraged to follow. *Holy*

Habits groups have been set up in some churches, and members are growing and learning together. *Learning Hubs* are supporting church Leaders and changing the ethos of churches. Anne Sardeson reported that Stepwise is replacing *TLS* and is helping individuals to grow in the knowledge of their faith and how to live as people of Christ. A pilot group is being set up this year and a report about it will be given at the next Synod. Lay preacher training is now given mainly through *TLS Lite* and Pastoral Training is also taking place. *TLS* is now finishing, although *Gateways into Worship* will continue until next year.

Youth Work There is a vacancy for a Children and Youth Development Officer, and Soo Webster, the chief Pilots Officer is retiring. A new Pilots programme will be coming out in September.

The Synod Treasurer, Tony Obi-Ezekpazu, gave a report on the Synod finances and told us the focus on the use of Synod funds should now be on people, not on property, Applications for *Stepwise* projects would be welcomed.

Dr. John Parry will be retiring soon and the London Inter Faith Centre at St. Anne's and St. Andrew's in North London will be closed, but London Inter Faith Initiatives will continue and James Fields would be pleased to receive news on any interfaith activities going on in the Synod.

After lunch, Dawn Watson, of *Thirty- one Eight*, formerly known as *Churches Child Protection Advisory Service* talked about Safeguarding within churches. She emphasised how important this is for churches, saying safeguarding is the responsibility of us all. Churches should be safe places and policies and procedures for

safeguarding should be in place, with DBS checks for Elders and those working with children and vulnerable adults being done every five years. Groups hiring church premises also should have a safeguarding policy in place and this should be included in any hiring agreement. Some training is being done within the Synod this year.

A final report on the M&M Review was then given by Keith Berry and John Wise. Questionnaires had been sent out to all the churches in the Synod regarding the formula for calculating contributions. It was agreed that the formula should be amended. However, there was still scope for discussion and Synod agreed with this.

A representative from St. John's New Barnet URC next brought forward a resolution on Climate Change. This church believes caring for creation is very important and the URC should not be investing in companies connected with fossil fuels. CCLA who specialise in ethical investments is asking for the opinion of the URC so it can consider the future. Climate chaos looms and stopping this is in our hands – for example we should use less diesel and gas. Mission Council will discuss this at their meeting in May and bring their recommendations to October Synod.

Terry Hinks led us in Closing Worship before the Synod finished at 3.45pm. It will next meet on Saturday 19th October 2019 at Fairford Leys, hosted by Chiltern Local Area Group.

Chingford URC is to be congratulated on their hard work and efficiency in enabling the Synod to run so smoothly, serving refreshments to so many people and making us very welcome.

Isabel Bala

ST JAMES' NEWS

ST. JAMES' CHURCH MEETING NOTES

FEBRUARY 2019

Our February Church Meeting was chaired by Revd. Ulrike Bell, and was attended by fourteen people. News of the church family was exchanged before moving on to other matters.

An in-depth cleaning of the interior of the church was due to be done at the end of February. The Russell Road fence still needs some repair work and this has to be settled with one of the neighbours on Russell Road. Our new Hall Manager, Gerald Lee, will be meeting with the Property and Finance Committee at the end of March to discuss new ideas he has for the church premises. He and his wife, Mariana, have already re-arranged the office, the vestry, all the kitchen cupboards and the floral cupboard, so it is easier to find things and hopefully we will keep it that way! After some discussion it was decided to keep in place the ruling that no spirits or beer should be drunk on the church premises; only wine at social events.

It was agreed that we would have no Elders' Election this year. Two of our Elders have to stand down at the end of May, after serving for six years, and one serving Elder is willing to stand again after serving three years, if Church Meeting agrees. From June we will then have only three serving Elders, but non-serving Elders will be asked to help out with Vestry, Door and Communion duties.

Bear Grylls, the Chief Scout, may be invited to attend our Harvest Festival Parade Service on September 15th, and possibly an Alpha Course could be set up after that.

Holy Habits groups are continuing and the group which meets in the Church Room on the second Monday morning of the month is going well. We are looking forward to the Lent Study Groups which will take place at St. James', led by our minister on Wednesday mornings and on Thursday evenings, beginning with a showing of the film *Chocolat*. The film *Risen* will also be shown in the Church Room at 5pm on Saturday 30th March.

There will be a Forest Group Quiet Day on Thursday 18th April from 10.30am - 3.00pm at St. James', with the theme of *Prayer*, to go along with our *Holy Habits* subject in February. A light lunch will be provided with any donations going to The Leprosy Mission. The day is usually appreciated by all those who attend, so do come along if you are able, but let me know in advance. Isabel Bala

WELCOME!



It has been a pleasure since the New Year to get to know the new Hall Manager at St. James, Gerald Lee, and his wife Mariana. Gerald

is an ordained minister in the Methodist Church and has already been called on to lead worship and a Lent Group session.

Gerald was ordained in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, in 1991 and was a Youth Pastor at the church where Val and Dale Gravett were members. They first came to England in 1999 with their two teenage children (now grown up and married with children themselves), and for a time Gerald was based in Guernsey, while Mariana was working in England.

However in 2014 they settled in England running a coffee shop in Clapham whilst living in High Wycombe. Mariana has a background in catering so there were home-made cakes! Eventually the strain of the hours and travelling became too much and they sold the business. They then spent time in France and Spain hoping to set up a retreat house but when things didn't work out, they finally returned to England.

When Dale and Val decided to retire to Lincolnshire they mentioned to the church that Gerald might be interested in the post of hall manager at St. James' and everybody is delighted with the outcome. We look forward to many happy years of working together in the mission of the church at St. James'.

WOODFORD GREEN NEWS

VIC GOSLING

There was a large congregation for Vic's funeral service on Wednesday, 27th February at our church in Woodford Green and many people shared their memories, both in the service and afterwards at the buffet lunch. For somebody who was always ready to chat, it was amazing how much we did not know about Vic and his early life. First of all his name was 'Albert', and secondly he was brought up in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) where his father worked for the railways. Much of this was discovered when his niece, Pat, got a

suitcase down from the loft when clearing out his house, and inside were photographs which nobody had seen before. There were some of him in ‘whites’ on various ships bringing him to and from England, and others with some of the household servants. And there were pictures from his war service – how we all wished Vic was there to tell us all about them.

Margaret Lineker and Audrey Mendham both wished to share their memories of Vic. Margaret remembers when he married June Fuggle (sister of the late Enid) and Audrey remembered how, having lost his beloved wife, he was a great comfort to her in the loss of her own husband. Both remembered how Vic took on caretaking duties on Friday mornings, meeting up with the flower arrangers and cleaning the church ready for Sunday. Margaret remembers: ‘There he was complete with Hoover, bucket, mop and dusters and you can be sure that no wisp of cobweb or fleck of dust would escape his eye.’ There would always be tea and biscuits, and Audrey writes: ‘Sometimes with church duties completed we would reward our labours with a meal at the local carvery.’

Vic would always arrive early at church on Sunday morning to set out the cups and get the kettles ready. David Bird was always grateful for tea and a chat when he arrived hotfoot from playing at an early morning service and Vic would always make him welcome. And Vic was a regular at our coffee morning at the manse making very insightful comments, and contributing to the discussions. We remember Vic with gratitude for all that he did for our church in so many ways. He was a good friend to many and even as he became more frail, he showed great fortitude and commitment to his church duties. May he rest in peace.

DIRECTORY

CHINGFORD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Buxton Road, Chingford, E4 7DP

www.chingfordurc.org.uk

CHURCH OFFICE		Tel: 8529 8888
SECRETARY	Malcolm Smith	Tel: 8524 2491
	chingfordurc@gmail.com	
ADMINISTRATOR	Malcolm Allard	Tel: 8524 1006
	chingford.urc@btconnect.com	
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: 8504 7518
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 meal (last in month)	Tel: 8529 0441
	4.30–6.00pm	Christian Youth + Club organised by Red Balloon	
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	

ST. JAMES' UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Palmerston Road, Buckhurst Hill, Essex IG9 5NG

www.stjamesurc.org.uk

SECRETARY AND NEWSLETTER CONTACT

Isabel Bala Tel: 8504 3543

isabelbala@hotmail.co.uk

TREASURER

Roger Neville Tel: 8504 5325

H: rogerneville21@gmail.com

O: roger.neville@alwynsllp.com

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	2-3.30pm 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

Bible Studies also take place on Mondays at 10.30am and repeated at 8.00pm at certain times during the year. Please see calendar for details.

**WOODFORD GREEN
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

High Elms, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0UP

www.wgufc.org.uk

SECRETARY

Jean Wyber

Tel: 8504 2447

jeanwyber@aol.com

TREASURER

Paul Corney

Tel: 8531 9168

paul.cOrney@btinternet.com

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)
	4.00pm	‘Messy Church’ second Sunday of every month
Monday	2.30pm	Jubilee Club (alternate weeks – see calendar for details)
Tuesday	6-7.30pm	14 th Woodford Brownie Pack (aged 7-10)
Thursday	7-9.00pm	14 th Woodford Guide Company (age 10-14)
Friday	9.00-10.30am	Play Café for toddlers and babies with their parents and carers
	6-7.30pm	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.