



**FOREST GROUP**  
of the United Reformed Church

[www.forestgroupurc.co.uk](http://www.forestgroupurc.co.uk)



# NEWSLETTER

## JULY/AUGUST 2017

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## OUR CHURCHES

### Chingford URC

Buxton Road, Chingford, E4 7DP

### Ray Lodge URC

Ray Lodge Road, Woodford Green, Essex, IG8 7NX

### St James' URC

Palmerston Road, Buckhurst Hill, Essex, IG9 5NG

### Woodford Green URC

High Elms, Woodford Green, Essex, IG8 0UP

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**MATERIAL FOR THE SEPTEMBER EDITION OF THE NEWSLETTER NEEDS TO BE WITH THE EDITOR BY SUNDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST.**

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## PASTORAL LETTER

Dear friends,



Summer is here, the happy time of the year. So much to be grateful for: sunshine, holidays to come, ice cream, BBQs, long days, summer clothes, happy children and

Guinea pigs! (this

fellow here is luckier than ours, who have to make do with less fancy roofs over their heads.)

And yet, the shadows of the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower darken the summer mood. So many lives lost in such a horrific way, and so many survivors' lives forced brutally in a new direction. And now the questioning and the anger and the search for causes, reasons and responsibilities.

It's such a complex world that we live in, there's so much going on. Our lives are changing, too, with terror attacks becoming almost part of normal life, something to be reckoned with, and the insecurities of the last elections and the Brexit negotiations with consequences for so many lives and institutions – it is a lot, and I haven't even mentioned places of hardship elsewhere in the world, climate change, North Korea or Donald Trump.

Jesus said: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; and trust also in me.” (John 14,1). Trust that God is working a purpose out; trust that Jesus sends us out to give hope and His love to the people we meet; trust that the Spirit lives in and among us, in our prayer and in our breathing. Resting in this trust, despite the horrors of the world around us, we might even at times look similar to this Guinea pig above.

With every blessing to you all,

*Ulrike*

## **END OF LIFE MATTERS**

### **Why talk about death and dying?**



- Because we and our loved ones will all die at some point, and it's good to be prepared.
- Because it makes things easier for those who are going to be left behind.
- Because death is part of life.

- Because there are so many questions, and it's good to talk with friends.
- Because it's one of the last taboos in our western society: kept quiet and pushed under the carpet for later...
- **Because we can: At Woodford URC, in 7 sessions, starting in September. Dates to be confirmed.**
- **All welcome!**

**The course comprises sessions on:**

- Why talk about death and dying?
- Making a will, lasting power of attorney, financial considerations
- Legacy: The story of my life. How I'd like to be remembered
- Planning my funeral
- The last days. What happens when we die?
- Departing in peace: Desert island discs
- What comes next? Thoughts on heaven

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

Contact: Ulrike 0208 505 5542

## **SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP**

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

### **Chingford**

- 2 July     Holy Communion - Revd Kevin Swaine
- 9 July     Youth & Parade Service - Revd Ulrike Bell  
*Followed by Church Picnic & Games for all ages*
- 16 July    Revd Peter Wortley
- 23 July    Martyn Payne (*Followed by church meeting*)
- 30 July    Dr Paul Ashitey
- 6 Aug     Holy Communion – Revd Richard Mortimer
- 13 Aug    Keith Brame
- 20 Aug    9.45 Holy Communion  
            Revd Jane Mortimer
- 27 Aug    Revd Ulrike Bell

### **Ray Lodge**

- 2 July     No service
- 9 July     Holy Communion – Trevor Cottrell
- 16 July    Revd Richard Mortimer

- 23 July Led by the Elders
- 30 July Revd June Colley
- 6 Aug Led by the Elders
- 13 Aug Revd Jane Mortimer
- 20 Aug Revd Richard Mortimer
- 27 Aug Led by the Elders

### **St. James', Buckhurst Hill**

- 2 July Holy Communion – Roger Hoath (*Sacramental offertory for Toybox Fund*)
- 9 July Revd Ann Woodhurst
- 16 July Revd Jane Mortimer
- 23 July Revd Richard Mortimer (*Church meeting follows this service*)
- 30 July Grace Smith
- 6 Aug Holy Communion – Revd Kevin Swaine (*Sacramental offertory for Church Action on Poverty*)
- 13 Aug Revd Richard Mortimer
- 20 Aug Songs of Praise led by the Worship Group
- 27 Aug Grace Smith

## Woodford Green

- 2 July      Holy Communion – Revd Ulrike Bell
- 9 July      Revd June Colley  
4.00 pm Messy Church
- 16 July     Revd June Colley
- 23 July     Peter Dawe (*followed by Church Meeting*)
- 30 July     Revd Richard Mortimer
- 6 Aug      Holy Communion – Steven Neville
- 13 Aug     Jean Wyber
- 20 Aug     Revd Ulrike Bell (*followed by Church BBQ*)
- 27 Aug     Revd June Colley

## CHURCH EVENTS

### July

- Sunday 2      **Chingford** 12noon Board of Management
- Monday 3      **St. James'** 2.00 – 3.30pm Craft/Prayer Group
- Tuesday 4      **Forest Group Coffee & Conversation** 10.30am in the  
Woodford manse
- Woodford Green** 8.00pm Elders' meeting
- Thursday 6      **Chingford** 7.30pm Youth Council
- Friday 7      **Chingford** 11.00am Worship Group
- Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Knit & Natter Group
- Monday 10      **Woodford Green** 2.30pm Jubilee Club – Kevin Swaine  
Queen Elizabeth I – 'A ripe apple from the tree'.
- Wednesday 12 **St. James'** 7.30pm Elders' meeting
- Friday 14      **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Neighbours Club – Flower Arranging  
Workshop with Mandy Waters
- Saturday 15      **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Trefoil Guild Strawberry Tea  
**Chingford** 3.00pm Wadham Players perform *Hansel & Gretel* in the Church Garden
- Sunday 16      **Forest Group Council** 2.00 pm at Woodford Green
- Thursday 20      **Chingford** 8.00pm Elders' meeting
- Friday 21      **Chingford** 11.00am Board of Management
- Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Knit & Natter Group
- Monday 24      **Woodford Green** 2.30pm Jubilee Club Afternoon Tea
- Friday 28      **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Neighbours' Club

Sunday 30     **Forest Group Garden Afternoon** 3.30pm at the home of June Colley, 6 Brook Gardens, Chingford E4 9ER – please bring chair. Donations of £3 will go to Loughton Food Bank

August

Thursday 3    **St. James’** 8.00pm Elders’ meeting

Friday 4       **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Knit & Natter Group

Monday 7      **St. James’** 2.00-3.00pm Craft/Prayer Group

Friday 11     **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Neighbours’ Club

Friday 18     **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Knit & Natter Group

Saturday 19   **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Trefoil Guild

Sunday 20     **Forest Group Garden Afternoon** 3.30pm at the home of Geoff & Eileen Packe, 29 Fairlands Avenue, Buckhurst Hill (see details above)

Friday 25     **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Neighbours’ Club – Bingo

Tuesday 29 – Friday 2 Sept. **Woodford Green Holiday Club for Young Children** (details in newsletter)

**Forward Notice:**

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2.00pm Forest Group Joint Elders Meeting followed by Forest Group Council**

## COFFEE MORNINGS

**Tuesdays 10.30 – 12.00  
at the Woodford Manse**



It was decided that in our meetings to come we'll base our talk on chapters of the book "Living the Questions" by David Felten and Jeff Proctor-Murphy.

There are sessions e.g. on How to read/understand the Bible, on God the Creator, on Jesus and his Passion, on Evil/Suffering and God's Love, on Social Justice, Incarnation, Mystery.

As always, we will choose our topic(s) for the next time. Don't worry if you haven't read the chapters in advance, just join in!

**Next sessions: July 4, September 5, October 3**

First theme: Chapter 2 Taking the Bible Seriously and  
Chapter 3 Thinking Theologically

**Everybody welcome!**

# FLOWER ARRANGING WORKSHOP

**Ray Lodge URC (Neighbours' Club)**

Friday 14 July

2.00pm – 3.30pm

**All welcome**

For both beginners and those wanting to improve their skills.

The workshop will cover the basics of a simple arrangement and also give some ideas for harvest displays.

Those attending can just watch or, if they want to have a go, should bring a dish or saucer and either their own flowers and oasis or purchase them from Mandy the instructor.

Contact Janet 02084917054 for more details and to give numbers attending.

(If this goes well a second workshop may be planned later in the year.)



## **ARTICLES**

### **REFLECTION**

#### **The Stone**

Jesus is mentioned in several places in the Bible as a stone. In Acts 4:11, Peter quotes Psalm 118:22 saying "He is 'the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone'". Also, in Romans 9:30-33 Paul says, "What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the 'stumbling stone'. As it is written, 'See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame' (quoting Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16).

A stone is both solid and dependable, but also inconvenient and immovable, depending on your point of view. We are all guilty of trying to prove ourselves worthy of God's approval, when, the truth is, we fail him again and again. When we do that, we reject the Stone instead of trusting Him. Thank God we do not have to depend on ourselves. We have a Rock that we can put our trust in.

Kevin Haigh

## **LOOKING AFTER OUR PLANET**

### **THINK GLOBALLY AND ACT LOCALLY**

St. James' Church is hoping to regain its status as an Eco- Church and one of our tasks is to make people in our community aware of how each of us has a part to play in looking after the environment to help make our planet a safe and beautiful place in the future.

#### **Here are some ideas about reducing waste and pollution:**

Landfill mountains are increasing due to our waste-making society. Councils have introduced recycling schemes but our national annual volume of waste is increasing faster than the amount going into recycling. Change is up to us. We have choices. We are responsible for the amount of waste we create and the way we dispose of it.

#### **Actions.** *Choose two or three of these:*

- Don't buy anything that has more than one wrapping
- Buy recycled products
- Don't flush non-biodegradable items down the loo
- Use recycled bin liners, or don't use bin liners and wash out the rubbish container
- Use only biodegradable detergents
- Compost your kitchen and garden waste
- Buy in bulk, if this reduces packaging and you can carry the items home
- Repair products whenever possible
- Buy organic - avoid products from intensive farming

**Research and Campaigning:** Choose one of these:

- Write to your MP about reducing our dependence on nuclear power
- Ask your local council about how it recycles –what it collects and why it doesn't collect more.

### **FROM QUARK TO PLANET**

*Creator God, from quark to planet your universe is awesome.  
Give us eyes to gape at the wonders daily about us, and the  
will to live in the harmony of your creating.*

*Help us to recognise and honour the connection of all things,  
even at cost to our own wants and comforts, so we may live  
gently on earth, and all creation praise you.*

*Amen*

*Chris Polhill*

## **MOVING STORIES**

Commitment for Life, through Christian Aid, has continued to support the **YMCA Women's Training Programme (WTP)** over the last six months. The WTP focuses on strengthening the role of women in Palestinian society while building more economically resilient societies, thereby creating the opportunity for vulnerable women to seek and achieve new levels of independence through financial and food security. This happens through career counselling, youth engagement and leadership programmes and through working with the Ministry of Education to ensure career advice sessions are included in the regular curriculum. The WTP's work also includes supporting and establishing women's cooperatives and holding training in agricultural work, food processing, animal husbandry, family health and the management of small projects with seed/seedling distribution before brokering access to markets.

### **Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans (BFTA)**

BFTA work with Palestinian producers on the promotion of traditional local crafts locally and internationally, to improve their marketability and increase sales. In December 2016, Christmas markets were held (including one in Bath, in the UK), which gave BFTA an opportunity to promote its products and its organization internationally. As part of Christian Aid's ACRE project, they are hoping to tap in new venues of technical assistance and access to capital available for expanding the markets for local producers. They have also brokered a relationship between two partners YMCA and BFTA, and are in talks to look at ways in which BFTA could market some of the olive oil soap produced by the YMCA communities.

## **EAST LONDON THREE FAITHS FORUM**

The Three Faiths Forum meeting at 8pm on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May was held at St. Anne Line RC Church in South Woodford. The topic for the evening was, *Living a Holy Life – Becoming God’s Person*. Father Francis Coveney, welcomed us to his church, and then Rabbi Maurice Michaels, from Bournemouth Reform Synagogue spoke about the word ***‘holy’***.

To Jewish people it means being discreet or different from those around us. There are two aspects to this, being just, righteous, having integrity and our loving kindness in relation to God. Our conversation with God has to be two-way, talking to him and listening to his voice speaking to us.

Father Francis Coveney then told us about the Jesuits who follow the teaching of St. Ignatius Loyola whose *Spiritual Exercises* are still followed by those seeking to live a holy life and to be fully united with God. Through prayer, meditation and reflecting on the scriptures, even going on a thirty day silent retreat, oneness with God can be achieved. Jesus was asked by a rich young man, ‘What must I do to attain eternal life?’ and he was told to follow the commandments. Common practices to build up our holiness include fasting and giving alms especially during Lent and going on pilgrimage. Yet when asked about the Last Judgment, Jesus commends those who help others.

The final speaker was Ali Asshar, Trustee of the Azeemia Foundation, a Sufi organisation whose aim is to promote peace in the world. As Ramadan was due to begin the following day, he spoke mainly about that special time for Muslims when through fasting and prayer they grow closer to God and become God-conscious people. Observing Ramadan he claimed is not easy, but is an experience beyond words and fasting is done for God alone.

A question and answer time followed, exploring how people can be 'In the world but not of the world'. It was agreed we have to be in the world and everything we do should be a part of our worship.

The next meeting of the Forum will be at 7.30pm on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July when a visit will be made to the largest Muslim cemetery in the UK, the '*Gardens of Peace*' in Hainault.

Isabel Bala

## **CHINGFORD NEWS**

### **NOTES OF CHURCH MEETING 11<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2017**

Church Meeting concurred with Woodford Green's request to sell former Highams Park URC.

#### **TRAINING**

Elders are tackling one topic for half an hour at each Elders meeting. Discipleship training – members were encouraged to sign up for an End of Life course to be held in the autumn. We are also considering a theological book club

#### **SCOUT GROUP**

Dirk Grobler has resigned as Group Scout Leader of the 27<sup>th</sup> Chingford Scout Group and there is no immediate prospect of a replacement. Malcolm Smith cannot continue as Scout Leader indefinitely. Malcolm has appointed a Group Administrator and Troop Administrator and is asking some of the parent helpers to consider warranted leadership, including GSL, to strengthen the leadership team

#### **FUTURE EVENTS**

The Wadham Players are performing Hansel and Gretel in the Church garden on 15<sup>th</sup> July (bring own garden chairs)  
Sing Immanuel are to be invited to perform at a tea party event in the autumn at our church

## **NOTES OF ELDERS' MEETING 15<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2017**

### **MINISTRY AND WORSHIP AND THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE CHURCH**

A letter from the Minister, Ulrike Bell, was discussed, relating to the situation which will arise on the retirement of Revd Richard Mortimer at the end of the year.

### **CHURCH MEETINGS**

We are happy to take responsibility for conducting our own church meetings, keeping Ulrike informed by sending her agendas and minutes and welcoming her occasional attendance or request for issues to be considered.

### **ELDERS' MEETINGS**

Whilst not opposed to the occasional joint Forest Group Elders' meeting to discuss issues of common interest with the other churches, we concurred with the other churches that the best method of running Forest Group affairs is through the Forest Group Council, which is constituted to equally represent all the churches. We also recognise our trustee responsibility to run our own church through our own Elders' meetings. Some are concerned that we should not become overloaded trying to promote Forest Group initiatives on top of maintaining our own church's activities.

### **FRIDAY MORNING PRAYER MEETING**

It was felt that our Friday morning prayer meeting and bible study is a valuable activity and we agreed as elders to take responsibility for running this so that Ulrike does not need to attend every week.

## **EARLY COMMUNION SERVICE**

Some members find the extra 9.45 am Holy Communion Service on a Sunday other than a first Sunday of benefit to them, so we would like to continue this. It was suggested that Ulrike presides at this service on a day when she preaches at the main service, or considers holding this service at another time in the week. We feel that Elders should only preside at a Communion Service on an emergency basis.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

It has been suggested that there should be a membership course for the young people of the church, which has been welcomed by Ulrike.

## **WORSHIP**

It was felt that worship gave us an opportunity to recharge our spiritual batteries for the week ahead, learn more about our faith and consider and pray about recent events. We have agreed recently that worship will be provided at Chingford on every Sunday morning during the year except for one joint Forest Group service and recognise that our members and adherents welcome the opportunity to come to our building every Sunday for worship and that some are unable to travel to other locations.

It is our responsibility as Elders to provide useful worship. We considered whether we should invite visiting preachers to follow a theme, but felt that it was sufficient to ask preachers to follow the weekly lectionary readings. The only exception would be where we invite a speaker to tell us about a Christian organisation and its activities. It was agreed to invite Ulrike to the next Elders' meeting to have a dialogue on plans for the future.

## **ST JAMES' NEWS**

### **ST. JAMES' CHURCH MEETING NOTES**

Our May Meeting was chaired by Rev Richard Mortimer and was attended by nineteen people. We began by exchanging news of the church family before moving on to other matters. We agreed to the sale of Highams Park church building.

### **YOUTH PROJECT**

It was agreed to give £350 from the income of our Mission Fund to finance the youth project to be run at St. James' in the autumn by Luke Lowrie from *Red Balloon*. He will do a six week course on video-making with some of the young people who attend our parade services, and the resulting videos will be shown at one of our church services, which should be exciting.

### **HARVEST FESTIVAL WEEKEND**

Margaret Minoletti told us more of her plans for the Harvest Festival Weekend at St. James'. She had been to the AGM of the Allotment Society and talked about the event there. Several tomato plants are now growing in pots near the church entrance and some of the young people from the uniformed organisations are growing veggies from seed near our wild flower garden. Hopefully they will be watered by someone using rain water from the two new water butts which the Scout leaders have installed below our church roof .

### **FUTURE MINISTRY**

Some time was spent discussing how we will manage when sadly, Revd Richard Mortimer leaves us at the end of 2017. It was decided that the Elders should meet with Revd Ukrike Bell to discuss her

future ministry with St. James' as she won't be able to attend all our Elders' and Church Meetings and we will have to manage more on our own, with one of the Elders chairing meetings in future.

### **CHURCHES TOGETHER**

The Churches Together Meeting at the Baptist Church on 15th May had gone well and it was interesting to hear from the Ark of the Covenant Church, which now meets at St. Stephen's Church, about their church activities. The next Churches Together Meeting will be held at the Baptist Church on 18th September.

### **BRADWELL FESTIVAL**

Members were reminded that the Bradwell Festival will take place on 1st and 2nd July , with Bishop Stephen Cottrell and Jonathan Cox among the speakers. Some people from St. James' hope to attend on the Pilgrimage Day, so let's hope the weather will be fine for that.

### **CHRISTIAN AID**

It was good to hear that our collection for Christian Aid Week was better than last year. With one house-house collection, donations from church members and two collections at Buckhurst Hill Station, we collected £721, which was £169 more than last year! All the collectors were thanked and especially Louise Woodcock, our CA Co-ordinator and Peter Minoletti who had helped count all the money.

### **FINALLY ...**

It was agreed that in future, minutes of Church Meetings should be emailed in advance to church members and paper copies given to those who are not on email – more work for the poor Church Secretary to do!

*Isabel Bala*

## WOODFORD GREEN NEWS



At the end of July Woodford's oldest member Gladys Evans turns 105! (this is not a printing error!)

Until a year ago Gladys still lived in her flat in Woodford, but then moved to a nursing home in Ilford, where she is well looked after. When I saw her just a few weeks ago, she smiled her beaming smile and did what she always does, she asked me detailed questions

about Woodford church and congregation. Then we talked about politics and Brexit and the elections. I have not met many people like her, who in old age are still so curious about the present. It keeps her young at heart!

Gladys is blessed with a very clear mind, good humour and a deep trust in God, all of which help her to take each day out of God's hands. "It's not nice getting old", she says, "you are so dependent on others." She can't stand up or walk anymore, so needs help for every move. Her message to the young ones (that would be any of us, right?): Be grateful for what you have been given; Always try your best and Take both the good and the bad days out of God's hands.

The Lord bless you, Gladys, and we thank God for His blessing through you!  
Ulrike

## DIRECTORY

### CHINGFORD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

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**NEWSLETTER**

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### 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
Monday	5.30–6.30 pm	27 <sup>th</sup> Chingford Beavers Tel: 8524 2491 (age 6 – 8 years)
Tuesday	1.30–3.00 pm	Club for Under 5s and Carers (Term time only) Tel: 8529 0071
	7.00–8.30 pm	27 <sup>th</sup> Chingford Cubs Tel: 8524 2491 (age 8 - 10½ years)
	7.30–9.00 pm	27 <sup>th</sup> Chingford Scouts Tel: 8524 2491 (10½ - 14 years)
Wednesday	12 noon (last in month)	Lunch Club: £4 meal Tel: 8529 0441
Thursday	5.45–7.15 pm	5 <sup>th</sup> Chingford Brownies Tel: 8529 1475 (age 7 – 10 years)
	7.30–9.00 pm	5 <sup>th</sup> Chingford Guides Tel: 8529 4420 (age 10 – 14 years)
Friday	9.30–12 noon	Coffee and Chat Tel: 8529 0441
	10.30-11.00 am	Prayer Group – Revd Richard Mortimer



## **ST. JAMES' UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

Palmerston Road, Buckhurst Hill, Essex IG9 5NG

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### **HALL MANAGER**

Dale Gravett Tel: 8505 0300  
[valandale@btinternet.com](mailto:valandale@btinternet.com)

## **REGULAR EVENTS**

- Sunday 10.30 am Morning Worship (with Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month)
- Monday 2-3.30pm 'Shell and Staff' Craft/Prayer Group on the first Monday in each month  
5.30 pm 2<sup>nd</sup> Buckhurst Hill Brownies 8508 7546  
7.00 pm 2<sup>nd</sup> Buckhurst Hill Guides 8508 3480
- Wednesday 7.00 pm Sing Emmanuel Choir
- Thursday 6.00-7.00 pm 28<sup>th</sup> Epping Forest Beavers 07960309175  
6.30-8.00 pm 28<sup>th</sup> Epping Forest Cubs 8504 5270  
7.30-9.00 pm 28<sup>th</sup> 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**

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**Revd June Colley**

Tel: 8529 5403  
[rev@jcolley.plus.com](mailto: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 <sup>th</sup> Woodford Brownie Pack (aged 7-10)
Thursday	7-9.00pm	14 <sup>th</sup> Woodford Guide Company (age 10-14)
Friday	6-7.30pm	PILOTS (a non-uniformed Christian group for children aged 4-11 years)