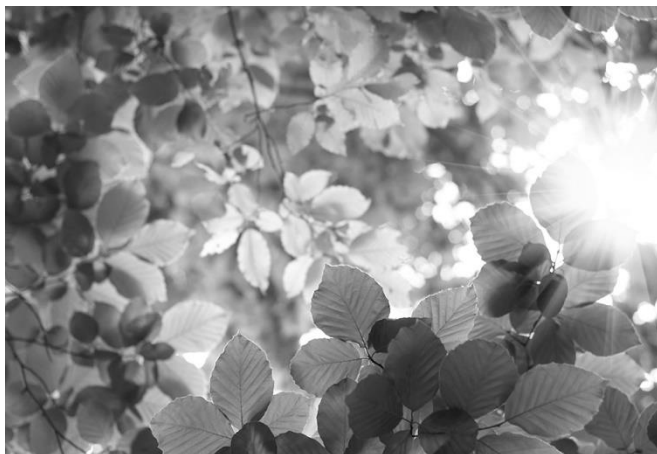




**FOREST GROUP**  
of the United Reformed Church

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



# NEWSLETTER MARCH 2018

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## **MINISTER**

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

## **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

Newsletter Editor: Rev June Colley

Tel: 020 8529 5403 | Email: [rev@jcolley.plus.com](mailto:rev@jcolley.plus.com)

**MATERIAL FOR THE NEXT EDITION OF THE NEWSLETTER  
NEEDS TO BE WITH THE EDITOR BY SUNDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> MARCH –  
PLEASE NOTE THE NEXT EDITION WILL BE A DOUBLE ISSUE  
FOR THE MONTHS OF APRIL AND MAY**

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## **PASTORAL LETTER**

### **FROM THE WIRRAL!**

Dear Friends,

It hardly seems possible that a month has passed since I retired, but here we are.

Our first words must be of huge thanks for the cheque, the gifts, the flowers, all the cards to our new address, and the expressions of good wishes for the future. Bless you all.

Some of the cheque has been used to purchase my ‘traditional’ membership of Lancashire County Cricket Club (which carries with it a place on a priority group for the ballot for tickets for the 2019 Old Trafford Ashes Test – I still grieve over the recent 4-0 defeat but the 4-1 victory in the one day series has helped a little), and the rest will go towards a summer house for the back garden.

Jane is now working at the Sue Ryder Charity Shop in Moreton just along the road and has also got involved with the gift shop at the nearby Urban Farm, a project involving animals and children which is thus right up her street. I have started volunteering with the Wirral Foodbank in Central Birkenhead. We have become regular attenders at St Andrew’s URC, Meols, just down the road in the other direction from the Sue Ryder Shop, and are getting used to the strange experience of sitting next to each other in worship.

Laura has found lovely walks in the dunes by the coast and in local parks. We have also found one large field surrounded by fences

which can be an enclosure where we can let her off and she can have a good run.

Love and blessings,

Richard and Jane

## **SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP AND OTHER SERVICES**

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

### **Chingford**

- 4 Mar Holy Communion – Grace Smith
- 11 Mar All Age Mothering Sunday Service and Uniformed Organisations Church Parade led by Marion Coram-Ware
- 18 Mar 9.45 Holy Communion  
10.30 Revd Ulrike Bell on the theme of Church Membership (followed by Church Meeting)
- 25 Mar **Palm Sunday** – Trevor Cottrell (preceded by blessing of palm crosses on Chingford Green at 9.45am)
- 29 Mar 7.30pm **Maundy Thursday Meditation** – Revd Ulrike Bell
- 30 Mar 10.00am **Good Friday Meditation** – Revd Ulrike Bell (followed by Chingford Churches Walk of Witness at 11.00am)
- 1 April **Easter Celebration with Holy Communion** – Revd Ulrike Bell (preceded by Easter Breakfast at 9.00am)

## **Ray Lodge**

- 4 Mar      Revd Claire Wilson
- 11 Mar     Holy Communion - Revd June Colley
- 18 Mar     Mona Shahbaz
- 25 Mar     Revd June Colley
- 1 April     **Easter Celebration Service at Woodford Green URC**

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

- 4 Mar      Holy Communion – Revd Kevin Swaine (*Sacramental  
offertory for London Churches Refugee Fund*)
- 11 Mar     Mothers' Day Parade Service – Revd Ulrike Bell
- 18 Mar     Eileen Packe
- 24 Mar     8.30pm **Forest Group Earth Hour Service**
- 25 Mar     Revd Kevin Swaine (*followed by Church Meeting*)
- 29 Mar     **Maundy Thursday Quiet Day** in Church Room 10.30am  
– 3.00pm
- 1 April     **Easter Celebration Service at Chingford URC**

## Woodford Green

- 4 Mar      Holy Communion – Revd Ulrike Bell
- 11 Mar     Revd Claire Wilson  
              4.00pm **Forest Group Messy Church**
- 18 Mar     Revd Kevin Swaine
- 25 Mar     Revd Ulrike Bell
- 30 Mar     **Meditation & Music for Good Friday**
- 1 April     **Easter Celebration Service with Holy Communion –**  
              Revd June Colley

## EARTH HOUR SERVICE



**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March 8.30pm – 9.30pm**

Each year millions of people around the world take part in WWF'S *Earth Hour*. It started in Sydney, Australia in 2007 and now it is the biggest movement to show support for protecting our planet and stopping climate change. Lights will be switched off for one hour from 8.30pm -9.30pm on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March this year. We will be holding an Earth Hour Service at St. James' in the Church Room at that time, with all the lights switched off, so if you decide to come, please bring a torch. We might even go outside for a while to look at the stars, weather permitting!

## CHURCH EVENTS

- Mondays            **Chingford** 6.00pm-8.00pm Perspective Youth Club
- Thursday 1        **St. James'** 11.00am Lent Study Group  
**Chingford** 6.30pm Lent Study Group
- Friday 2            **Chingford** 9.30am-12noon Fair Trade '*Big Brew*'  
Coffee Morning  
**Chingford** 11.00am Worship Group meeting  
**Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Knit & Natter Group
- Friday 2            **WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**
- Sunday 4           **Forest Group Council 2.00pm at Woodford Green URC**  
**This is an open meeting for all church members in the**  
**Forest Group to discuss proposals to develop the**  
**Woodford Green building.**
- Monday 5           **St. James'** 2.00-3.30pm Craft/Prayer Group
- Tuesday 6          **St. James** 10.30-12noon Fair Trade '*Big Brew*' Coffee  
Morning in the Church Room  
**Woodford Green** 8.00pm Elders' Meeting
- Thursday 8         **St. James'** 11.00am Lent Study Group  
**Chingford** 6.30pm Lent Study Group  
**St. James'** 7.30pm Elders' Meeting in Church Room
- Friday 9            **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Knit & Natter Group
- Monday 12         **Woodford Green** 2.30pm Jubilee Club – Musical  
afternoon with June Colley and Eric Doig

- Tuesday 13 **Forest Group Coffee Morning & Book Club** 10.30am at the Woodford manse
- Thursday 15 **St. James'** 11.00am Lent Study Group  
**Chingford** 6.30pm Lent Study Group  
**Chingford** 8.00pm Elders Meeting
- Friday 16 **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Knit & Natter Group
- Saturday 17 **Chingford** 7.00pm Concert of Spanish and Latin American Music (see newsletter for further details)
- Thursday 22 **Chingford** 6.30pm Lent Study Group
- Friday 23 **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Knit & Natter Group
- Monday 26 **Woodford Green** 2.30pm Jubilee Club - TBA
- Wednesday 28 **Chingford** 12 noon Lunch Club

April

- Thursday 5 **St. James'** 7.30pm Elders Meeting
- Monday 9 **St. James'** 2.00-3.30pm Craft/Prayer Group

**BIBLE SOCIETY QUIZ**

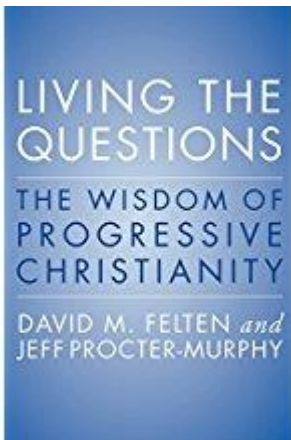
8.00pm on 12<sup>th</sup> March  
at Woodford Bridge Church Hall,  
cost £5 and bring your own food



## COFFEE MORNING BOOK CLUB

10.30 am in the Woodford Manse

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> March



This month we will be moving on to Section 2 : 'Reconciliation', and discussing two chapters – Restoring relationships and The Prophetic Jesus.

All are welcome to our lively discussions!  
You don't have to have read the book – but it helps.

## **EXTERNAL EVENTS**

### **Westminster College, Cambridge**

*Eldership on the Front Line*

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> March-Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018

To book a place: Telephone 01223 330632

Email [admin@westminster.cam.ac.uk](mailto:admin@westminster.cam.ac.uk)

### **Re-Imagine Church – Join the Learning Hub**

*Equipping disciples for their daily lives*

Eight sessions start in January on the third Thursday evening of each month except August 2018 led by Steve Rouse

Next session: 15<sup>th</sup> March

At Lumen URC, 88 Tavistock Place, London WC1

Email: [janeweedon201@gmail.com](mailto:janeweedon201@gmail.com) if you wish to attend

### **Cockfosters Centre for Spirituality**

**29 Bramley Road, Oakwood , London N14 4HE**

*Christian Mindfulness* with Peter Tyler

10.00am-4.00pm Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> March

To book a place email: [cockfosters@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:cockfosters@rcdow.org.uk)

or Tel: 020 84496648

**FREE TO BELIEVE**  
**NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2018**  
**8th - 10th NOVEMBER**  
**at The Hayes Conference Centre**  
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*‘Grounded and Grateful’*

Main Speaker: **Diana Butler Bass**

Diana Butler Bass is an award-winning author and internationally known public speaker and thought leader on issues of spirituality, religion, culture, and politics. She has preached and taught in hundreds of church, college, and conference venues in North America and beyond.

Her lectures will explore the surprising complexity of thanksgiving, how we understand gratitude, how we practice it, and why it is so important in these difficult days.

Bible Studies: **Trevor Dennis**

Trevor Dennis is passionate about the Bible and its extraordinary artistry, about opening up the world of biblical scholarship to a wider audience, and about being honest about it all.

He has written extensively on the Old Testament and the Gospels, and has six collections published of sermons written in story form or in blank verse.

More information and the booking form is available on the Free to Believe website: [www.freetobelieve.org.uk/conferences](http://www.freetobelieve.org.uk/conferences)

## ARTICLES

### REFLECTION:

#### The Living God

Sometimes, I think we live as if all that mattered was how we behave, the good deeds we do, the causes we support, as if by doing so, we can earn God's favour. This places far too much emphasis on us and too little on God. God's standard is much higher than we can reach – absolute perfection. The only way we can reach that standard is if someone else does it on our behalf, and then transfers the credit to us. That is what Jesus accomplished in His life and His death on the cross.

There was no other good enough  
To pay the price of sin;  
He only could unlock the gate  
Of heaven, and let us in.

Similarly for the Hebrew nation in the Old Testament, it was God who sent the plagues on the Egyptians, and God who opened up the Red Sea, and God who sent them food in the desert. God is referred to in the Bible as the Living God, in order to emphasise the contrast between the lifeless idols of other nations and the God who rescued the Israelites from Egypt.

God is not sitting in the background waiting for us to act. He is the one who takes the initiative, who does the rescuing, and we should honour Him for it.

Kevin Haigh

## MOVING STORIES

**“That the wall will fall into a bridge that we can use for reconciliation; that we can shake hands and say ‘Shalom’.”**

This is the prayer of a Palestinian Christian lady called Clemence; she has lived in Bethlehem most of her life. Clemence was only two years old when the State of Israel was established in 1948. She tells us that her family was driven out of the city of Jaffa by Jewish forces, becoming refugees in Jordan.

Her father, who was Greek Orthodox, wanted her to be educated in Bethlehem, so he sent her to a Lutheran boarding school there. Later she married a Catholic, led Sunday School in a reformed church and taught for many years in the local Lutheran school. ‘Ecumenical’ would be a good way to describe her.

In 2003, when Israel started building the separation barrier, Checkpoint 300 appeared right next to Clemence’s home. Land she owned on the other side of the barrier was confiscated. She refused the nominal amount of money she was offered for it. Suddenly she was stopped from going to see family and friends in Jerusalem; even people who had previously been close neighbours were now separated.

“They took our land, our freedom, our dignity; they occupied us,” says Clemence. “But I can still pray for them.”

For years now, every Friday, she meets with other campaigners to walk a section of the barrier while praying for peace and an end to the occupation. ‘Wall Prayer’ is ecumenical and it has been a privilege

for Ecumenical Accompaniers to attend. People from around the world have taken part, including Messianic Jews. “There can be eight people or 80,” Clemence says.

The wall severely constricts Palestinian lives, both in body and in mind. It segregates and subjugates those controlled by it, giving power to those doing the controlling.

Ecumenical Accompaniers see huge numbers of international pilgrims arrive in Bethlehem every year and have a real spiritual experience. But these pilgrims can go through the separation barrier very easily. As a result, very few appreciate how different it is for Palestinians, and what life is really like for them. In the early hours of every working day, thousands of Palestinian men across the West Bank wait to pass through the checkpoints to get to their jobs – if allowed. Despite the humiliation they must face, at least they know what to expect.

On a Friday, however, families with little children pass through. What does it teach these children? You can see the fear on their faces as they pass by the soldiers, through the turnstiles and metal detectors, while parents and grandparents encourage them to keep going. What is the future for them?

The Israeli government says the separation barrier is for the security of Israelis. In 2004, however, the International Court of Justice advised that “the construction of the wall ... and its associated regime are contrary to international law”. This is because the barrier is not always on the Israeli side of the Green Line (the 1967 border), or within Israel, but frequently on Palestinian land. It incorporates many

Israeli settlements there, together with some precious Palestinian agricultural land and water sources.

Clemence's own particular prayer says so much to us: "That the wall will fall into a bridge that we can use for reconciliation; that we can shake hands and say 'Shalom'."

By Ecumenical Accompanier Paul in Bethlehem

**ACTION:** If you pray, join in faith with those who stand at 'Wall Prayer', seeking a just peace in the context of an end to the occupation.

Permission given. EAPPI UK & Ireland, [www.eyewitnessblogs.com](http://www.eyewitnessblogs.com)

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## **CHINGFORD NEWS**

Lots of people have been to visit John Griffiths at Forest Place. He recently celebrated his 101<sup>st</sup> birthday.

We are delighted to record that Chief Scouts Awards have recently been awarded to Beavers, Jessica Edmunds and Benick de Jongh van Arkel and to Cub, Billy Ayto. Congratulations!

### **RED BALLOON'S HOLIDAY BIBLE CLUB**

We had a lot of fun at holiday Bible club from Monday to Thursday in half-term. There were lots of leaders including young leaders (team 6) and adult leaders. The children were split into three groups according to age.

We had games, songs and a Bible story that was split into smaller parts. The story was about Nehemiah rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, so on Monday, we built our own walls up Pole Hill out of branches.

On Wednesday, we went in search of the letters in “Nehemiah” and our group found 9½ full “Nehemiah”s. The main song we sang was “Ace Foundations” and we also sang “Boing” which was good fun.

We made some new friends and enjoyed playing with old ones. At the beginning of each session we had free time when you could play games, do wordsearches or build things like lego or a marble run. Some of my friends and I made a massive marble run out of four smaller ones.

By Lydia Haigh

## **RAY LODGE NEWS**

### **UPDATE**

Following discussions at the Forest Group Council on the 4<sup>th</sup> February, it was decided to postpone any amalgamation of Ray Lodge URC with another church until later in the year. Further discussion will take place at the next Council meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March.

### **KNIT & NATTER/NEIGHBOURS' CLUB**

The two clubs previously held on alternative weeks on Friday afternoons have been amalgamated, but there will still be tea and biscuits, and lots of knitting and nattering, along with other activities. We have recently played dominoes and looked at old photographs, trying to pick out people we know when they were much younger!

Perhaps it's time for a new name for our Friday afternoon get-togethers?

## **ST JAMES' NEWS**

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

Our January Church Meeting was chaired by Margaret Minoletti, and was attended by thirteen people. We began by exchanging news of the church family before moving on to other matters.

The Churches Together pre- Christmas Outreach at Buckhurst Hill Station had gone well, with three of our members helping. Our Mince Pies and Carols Evening and our Church New Year Party had been successful, with members appreciating the food and entertainment provided.

#### **PROPERTY AND FINANCE**

We heard that new tenants had moved into the church manse at a slightly lower rental.

Some water leaks in the church premises had been dealt with and it is recommended that the roof be painted with solar paint in the near future to help preserve it. The electricity supply to the church needs to be replaced, and this will be done during the half-term holiday in February, as a trench from the church to the end of the driveway will have to be dug up, causing disruption to hall users and residents of St. James' Gate. The solar panels can then be reconfigured so they can work more efficiently.

The insurance cover for the church needs to be re-assessed as the current amount appears to be excessive. The church accounts for the

past year had been tabled and they showed a deficit, although fees from lettings and offertories had increased.

Negotiations with the owners of St. James' Gate are still on-going, regarding the repair work which needs to be done on the old church tower and their request for an extension of their lease for another 100 years.

Javid Salim, from Alwyns Accountants, is now our financial examiner, but we still need to have a named treasurer, since Roger Neville wishes to stand down from the role of acting treasurer and we also need a representative to attend meetings of the Buckhurst Hill Money Advice Service – some more things for the Elders to think about!

We are still waiting for some definite plans from Epping Forest Food Bank before we decide to give money from our Mission Fund to help them rent storage space for donated food.

We have decided to support WaterAid's *Jars of Change Appeal* again during Lent this year, with filled jars needing to be returned by Sunday 8th April.

We are hoping the *Big Brew* on Tuesday March 6th at St. James' will raise lots of money for Traidcraft, especially as the amount will be doubled by the UK government.

### **FUTURE EVENTS**

Plans for our May/ Spring celebrations are well in hand with a caller booked to come for the May Pole Dance on Saturday May 5th.

We are looking forward to the series of Lent Study Groups each Thursday morning at St. James', beginning on 15th February and also to the Quiet Day on Maundy Thursday, 29th March from 10.30am - 3.00pm. Please try to come along if you can.

*Isabel Bala*

## **WOODFORD GREEN NEWS**

On Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> February, members of Woodford Green, along with members of other Forest Group churches, met with representatives of two firms of architects who had been asked to present their ideas about how the building might be altered to reflect our future needs as a church. Their ideas were further discussed at an open church meeting the following Sunday.

This will be a topic for discussion at an open session of the Forest Group Council on Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> March. Please come if you can.

Both architects presented interesting ideas about modifications to the building to improve what is described by estate agents as 'kerb appeal'. It was also important to look at ways to improve accessibility, and to open up the sanctuary space for more flexible worship and community use.

The general consensus at the church meeting was that these were exciting ideas, although it was recognised that when we finally choose an architect with whom we can work, that is when the hard work will start in negotiating what is feasible, desirable and affordable!

## DIRECTORY

### CHINGFORD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Buxton Road, Chingford, E4 7DP

[www.chingfordurc.org.uk](http://www.chingfordurc.org.uk)

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| <b>NEWSLETTER</b>    |                |  |
| <b>CONTACT</b>       | 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 |
| Monday    | 5.30–6.30 pm               | 27 <sup>th</sup> Chingford Beavers (age 6 – 8 years)                  | 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 <sup>th</sup> Chingford Cubs (age 8 - 10½ years)                   | Tel: 8524 2491 |
|           | 7.30–9.00 pm               | 27 <sup>th</sup> Chingford Scouts (10½ - 14 years)                    | Tel: 8524 2491 |
| Wednesday | 12 noon<br>(last in month) | Lunch Club: £4 meal   | Tel: 8529 0441 |
| Thursday  | 5.45–7.15 pm               | 5 <sup>th</sup> Chingford Brownies (age 7 – 10 years)                 | Tel: 8529 1475 |
|           | 7.30–9.00 pm               | 5 <sup>th</sup> Chingford Guides (age 10 – 14 years)                  | 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](http://www.stjamesurc.org.uk)

### **SECRETARY AND NEWSLETTER CONTACT**

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H: [rogerneville@hotmail.com](mailto:rogerneville@hotmail.com)  
O: [rogerneville@alwynsllp.com](mailto:rogerneville@alwynsllp.com)

### **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 Craft/Prayer Group on the first Monday 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**  
High Elms, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0UP  
[www.wgufc.org.uk](http://www.wgufc.org.uk)

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[rev@jcolley.plus.com](mailto:rev@jcolley.plus.com)

**REGULAR EVENTS**

|          |              |   |
|----------|--------------|---|
| Sunday   | 10.30am      | Morning Worship and Junior Church<br>(with Holy Communion on the first<br>Sunday of each month) |
|          | 4.00pm       | 'Messy Church' second Sunday of<br>every month  |
| Monday   | 2.30pm       | Jubilee Club (alternate weeks – see<br>calendar for details)                                    |
| Tuesday  | 6-7.30pm     | 14 <sup>th</sup> Woodford Brownie Pack<br>(aged 7-10)   |
| Thursday | 7-9.00pm     | 14 <sup>th</sup> Woodford Guide Company<br>(age 10-14)  |
| Friday   | 9.00-10.30am | Play Café for toddlers and babies<br>with their parents and carers                              |
|          | 6-7.30pm     | PILOTS (a non-uniformed Christian<br>group for children aged 4-11 years)                        |