

Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

August / September 2016

(No: 451)



Minister: Rev Bruce Sawyer (01392 256716)



Wonford is a
Fairtrade church

The **Methodist Church**

www.wonfordmethodistchurch.org.uk



A Message From The Minister

Dear Friends,

It's one of those years where it's a good summer if you're a sports fan, but potentially rather annoying if you're not. After wall to wall coverage of the European Football Championships (England's humiliation somewhat softened by the 12 years of living in Wales and so able to feel some justification in sharing their success!), our screens will soon be full of Olympic and Paralympic coverage. There will be successes and disappointment. Various dreams stand on the verge of fulfilment. For some, just reaching the games is the fulfilment of a lifetime's ambition, for others, only gold will do. Whatever the dream, it has taken months, if not years of dedicated hard work and sacrifice to get to this point. Careful attention is paid to every detail; diet, sleep, stretching, strength, technique, equipment will all have been refined to get in the best shape. It is, however, not uncommon to hear coaches and athletes talk about one thing that matters more than any of these – desire, determination, motivation, hunger. Apparently it is this that enables the endless early morning starts, the practice through dark winter months and the competitive edge to squeeze out that last bit of effort when your body is screaming stop.

And it seems it was this that impressed the apostle Paul about athletes in his day. Their desire to win enabled them to do what it takes to achieve their goal, win the prize. This was something that Paul could relate to – doing what it takes in order to share the Good news of God's love with all, and in so doing, sharing in the blessings of this love that had embraced him (1 Cor 9: 20-27).

In introducing his theme for the year – holiness – the new President of Conference, Roger Walton, suggested that some have found it more helpful to understand holiness as our spiritual fitness. It is how we train ourselves to become more fully those who bear God's image and are being transformed into his likeness. Those practices of prayer, reading scripture, worship, giving (not just of our money, but our time and abilities), meeting together, fasting, simplicity and celebration are some of the ways in which Jesus' disciples have traditionally trained themselves to follow in Jesus' way. Ways which help to open them up to God's renewing, transforming and redeeming love.

As we watch the athletes compete this summer, let it be a prompt to reflect on our own spiritual fitness. Do we desire to know God's love more and to continue being transforming in his likeness? Like Paul, are we prepared to do what it takes? What one change could you make as you continue to run this race of faith?

With every blessing,

Rev Bruce Sawyer

Dates For July

Flowers

August

7th Edith & Tudor
14th Bronwen & Clifford
21st Lisa
28th Eileen

September

4th Mandy
11th Karen
18th Bronwen & Clifford
25th Melanie

Coffee

August

7th Alison
14th Eileen
21st Sheila
28th Anne & John

September

4th Jenny & Fran
11th TBA
18th TBA
25th Anne & John

Minister's Monthly Bible Study Group

This group meets in the lounge at 2pm normally on the third Thursday each month. **There is NO meeting in August - below is the date for September.** All are welcome and if you'd like to learn more, do speak with Bronwen or Clifford Maddicks.

15th 2.00 p.m. Bible Study in the lounge.

Tuesday Home Group

This group is continuing their study of 'The Parables'. **There is NO meeting in August - below are September dates.** For more information see Monika Noronha. New members always welcome.

6th 7.30pm Venue to be confirmed
20th 7.30pm Venue to be confirmed

Review of Evening Worship

A reminder that Worship Team will be reviewing evening worship in the Autumn and are currently asking people to share any thoughts or ideas they may have regarding this. Please share your contributions with one of the worship team

[Tony, Joan, Terry, Alan, Caroline C, Caroline S, Mandy, Paul, Gary, Monika, Jon or Bruce].

Family Announcement

Simone Oldfield would like to announce to her church family that on Saturday 20th August she will be marrying Leah Holland. If you are able to remember Simone and Leah in your prayers at this time, that would be very much appreciated.

'Journey of Creation' Fence Decoration

A huge thank you to all who have helped to tell the 'Journey of Creation' on our fence. It looks wonderful and the judge was impressed, particularly with the involvement of so many different people and groups. We will find out how Wonford have done as part of the Britain in Bloom competition in October - see inside back cover for photos.

Refugee Crisis

Following on from the morning service on 26th June, anyone who would like to continue reflecting on the current situation regarding refugees might find the following publication from the Churches Joint Public Issues team – Made for Goodness: A Faithful Response to the Refugee Crisis – helpful. It can be accessed via the following link: <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Made-for-goodness-A-faithful-response-to-the-refugee-crisis.pdf>

Harvest Baskets

This September we will once again be collecting non perishable foods for the local Children's Centre. But we will start the collection from Sunday 28th August as our Harvest Festival is earlier (25th September) this year. Please let's pull out all the stops to bless families in our local community.

A reminder of the sort of things needed:

Tinned foods
Rice
Tea/coffee
Toiletries

Pasta/spaghetti/noodles
Soups
Jams/marmalade
Toothpaste and brushes

Cereals
Chocolate
Biscuits
Toilet rolls

Many thanks!
Monika



Methodist Church to Review it's Understanding of Marriage and Relationships

A task group established to consider whether the Methodist Church's understanding of marriage and relationships should be revisited has reported back to this year's Methodist Conference.

Following a decision at the Conference in 2014, people from across the Methodist Connexion have been considering marriage and relationships as part of a process overseen by the task group. The discussions show that there is a broad range of opinions held by Methodists on these matters.

The Church is to reconsider how its understanding of marriage should be expressed. This does not necessarily mean that there will be a change of definition, but that the Church wishes to re-examine the definition through a period of theological and scriptural reflection.

The task group prepared guidance and other resources to help members of the Methodist Church in their discussions on marriage and relationships.

The task group was established at the Methodist Conference in 2014 to consider whether or not the Methodist Church should revisit its definition of marriage and it's understanding of family life, marriage and the single person. Its report, received by the Methodist Conference earlier today, 5 July 2016, is the result of two years consideration by the task group, along with reflection and conversation within the Methodist Church. So far, at least 8,000 members have taken the opportunity to participate in conversations across the Methodist Church, where a wide range of views were expressed.

The Church's definition of marriage was one of those subjects discussed. The task group considered the existing 1992 "Statement on Christian Understanding of Family Life, The Single Person and Marriage". In the Statement the Methodist Church reiterates its view that marriage is "the lifelong union of one man and one woman". However, whilst many Methodists support this definition as it stands, there is a range of reasons to revisit it. For example, some people feel the Church's definition should be extended to include the marriage of same sex couples. Some people feel that the definition only describes the status of marriage, not its purpose and responsibilities and revisiting the definition is important part of the process even if it remains unchanged. The Conference directed that a new

Statement on marriage and relationships should now be prepared and that, as part of that process, the definition of marriage should be revisited.

The Methodist Children's Youth and Assembly, 3Generate, also considered marriage and relationships at the request of the young people themselves. 3Generate recommended that youth workers and ministers should be trained to create safe spaces to talk about all interpretations of relationships to encourage discussions about same sex marriage.

The Revd Graham Carter, Chair of the Marriage and Relationships Task Group commented; "It is essential to take time over this issue because the process of finding a way forward is as important as reaching a decision. Enabling people in the church to talk openly about their differing convictions and value their common commitment to Jesus Christ is key to what it means to be a Christian community.

"The decision of the Conference to establish a working party on the matters of marriage and relationships is an important step which comes from a widespread conversation in which people have listened, respected each other's position and engaged in deep reflection together. The conversations will continue and we will go on responding to the challenges of interpreting God's love for today's society.

Prayer Focus for August / September

August

Jesus said, "My kingdom does not belong to this world....I was born and came into the world for this one purpose, to speak about the truth.

Whoever belongs to the truth listens to Me."

John 18:36a,36b (Good News Bible)

Week beginning Sunday 7th

Please pray for our nation, churches and peoples as we continue to work through the many changes and challenges following the referendum. Pray God will grant us wisdom to listen to the truth of Jesus' voice above that of the world, so His purposes may be worked out in a harmonious and peaceful way for the benefit of all.

Pray also for those same purposes to be worked out within our church family and in our own family situations.

Week beginning Sunday 14th

Please pray for all ministers and their families on the move as they settle into new homes and neighbourhoods, especially Superintendent Rev Steve Santry and Probationer Rev Yangsun Yi as they join our circuit.

Week beginning Sunday 21st

Please pray for a double portion of God's blessings to be present at the United Service this evening here at Wonford.

Pray also for those same blessings to rest on all going to the Greenbelt Festival next weekend to hear, see and experience the wealth of Christian music, arts and teaching there.

Week beginning Sunday 28th

Please pray for people whose everyday life is a constant worry and struggle. Pray they will find comfort and strength from the words of Jesus, who said, "Come to Me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matt 11:28)

September

Come to Him (Jesus), to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house.

1 Peter 2:4,5 (Revised Standard Version)

Week beginning Sunday 4th

As we begin this new Methodist year with all its fresh opportunities, please pray for all who preach, teach and lead us to Jesus, that we might 'like living stones be built into a spiritual house.

Pray also that young ears, eyes and hearts at Countess Wear Primary School will be open to receive the good news of the bible stories which our minister Bruce and the Church team present to them in this second year of 'Open the Book'.

Week beginning Sunday 11th

Today is Racial Justice Sunday; please pray that all people, whatever their colour, creed, sexual orientation or ethnic background, may be treated equally, being seen in the way God sees them – made by Him and equally precious to Him.

Lift up also in your prayers a) the Circuit meeting at the Mint on Tuesday, b) our Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, c) the preparations for Messy Church next Sunday.

Week beginning Sunday 18th

In this second week of the new Themed Preaching series on Hebrews, please pray for those who will be leading the series, that the Holy Spirit will bring a fresh revelation of God's word through them.

As we listen to that word thank God that we who are works in progress get closer each day to being who God created us to be.

Week beginning Sunday 25th - Harvest!

It's Harvest Festival today.

We are blessed to be a blessing.

Please pray those blessings will be passed on with every donated tin and packet of food given for the harvest boxes, going to the Chestnut Childrens' Centre.

Thank God for the annual miracle of seedtime and harvest, His gracious provision for us all.

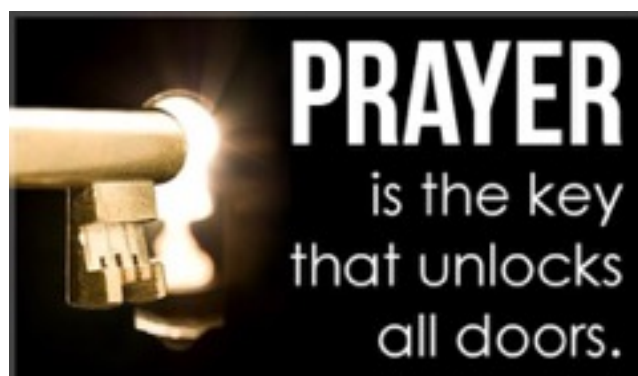
Phone Prayer Link

Should you, or those you know, wish to be supported in prayer, the first contacts are Michael or Judith Maher (01392 214789). Your request will then be passed to members of the Prayer Link who will pray for your need. If the first contact is unavailable, please contact either Margretta Bowstead (437329) or Margaret Kearns (679949).

After Church Prayer Support

This is available in the Quiet Room on Sunday mornings. Two members of the Prayer Team will be available to pray with you.

The Prayer Team



News from the Methodist Church

Following on from the EU Referendum

The Revd Steve Wild and Jill Barber, the President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, have released this statement:

“The people have spoken through the democratic process. We recognise that the result will cause pain to some people who voted with passion and integrity and that now is the time to move forward together with goodwill. The structures have changed but our hopes for a fair, just and equal society continue. We must now gather the political will to tackle poverty, climate change and the refugee crisis.

“This referendum has shown both the best and the worst of our democracy. It is to be celebrated that major constitutional change has happened peacefully and transparently; something that is all too rare in the world even today. We are saddened that the referendum debate has at times promoted feelings of fear and even hatred and racism. We do not believe that most people, however they voted in the referendum, wanted this. It certainly does not represent the kind of country that Britain wants to be. We must be careful now that these narratives do not shape the way that we do politics in the future.

“As the future of our role in the EU is negotiated, we cannot cut ourselves off from Europe. We pray for our brothers and sisters in Europe, and particular in our sister Churches, and assure them that our love and commitment towards them is undiminished.”

The Joint Public Issues Team offered this prayer:

God of every nation and people, at this historic moment we pray for all who are affected by the decision that we have made.

Whatever differences this has revealed within our own society, may they not eclipse what we have in common.

Where the narratives of political debate have caused harm and division, help us to reclaim the true values of our shared humanity.

Where exaggeration and distortion have generated suspicion and fear, may truth and honesty restore hope and goodness.

We pray for all the nations of Europe that you will help us to find ways of living and working together to pursue the mercy and justice that you require.

We recommit ourselves – together – to the values of your eternal kingdom, and pray that along with all people we might help your world become more as you intended. Amen.

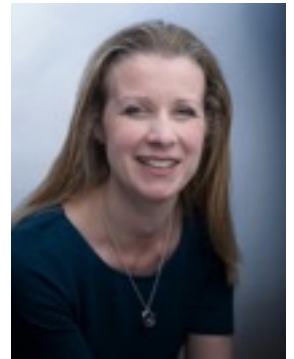
Roger Walton - President of the Conference 2016/2017



Growing up in Pudsey, West Yorkshire, Roger Walton started attending a Methodist Sunday School at the age of seven. He became a Christian at 16, becoming a local preacher at 18 and offering for ministry whilst at university. Married to Marion and with two children and three grandchildren, Roger has served in circuits in the West Midlands, Liverpool and St Albans. For ten years he was the Director of the Open Learning Centre, followed by eleven years of the Wesley Study Centre. He is currently Chair of the West Yorkshire District.

“Becoming President of the Conference is a wonderful gift and I am deeply honoured,” said Roger. “I owe so much to the Methodist people and have learned the way of Jesus in this Church. I hope to encourage us to continue to be a learning, loving and outward-looking community for transformation of the world.”

Rachel Lampard - Vice-President of the Conference 2016/2017



Rachel Lampard is the daughter of a Methodist minister and her early memories are of sitting at the manse kitchen table, discussing religion and politics. These twin passions have continued throughout her life. Growing up in London in the 1980s, she was deeply affected by increasing homelessness. On leaving university she found work with housing charities, including Catholic Housing Aid Society leading their policy and campaign work.

Rachel began working for the Methodist Church in 2000 and in 2008 became Team Leader of Joint Public Issues Team, a collaboration of four denominations, including the Methodist Church, campaigning and speaking out on issues of poverty, climate change and peace.

Rachel says, “Methodists care about God’s world. I’m excited by how Methodists, inspired by God, get stuck in and have such a passion for justice.”

In 2006 Rachel was appointed as a Commissioner with the Gambling Commission, responsible for regulating the gambling industry. She focused particularly on protecting children and vulnerable people. She was awarded an MBE for her efforts in this year’s Queen’s Birthday Honours List.

Rachel is married to Steve and they have three children.

Dates For Your Diary

August 2016

| | | |
|----------|------------|---|
| Sun 7th | 10.00 a.m. | All Age Worship |
| | 6.30 p.m. | United Service at Silverton MC - Rev Ann Varker |
| Sun 14th | 10.00 a.m. | Stephen Lea |
| | 6.30 p.m. | United Sacrament Service at St Thomas MC |
| Sun 21st | 10.00 a.m. | Rev Paul Collings |
| | 6.30 p.m. | Rev Terry Spencer - Sacrament Service |
| Sun 28th | 10.00 a.m. | United Prayer & Praise at Wonford MC |
| | 6.30 p.m. | Rev Bruce Sawyer |
| | | United Service at Sidwell St MC |
| | | Rev Julian Albrow |

September 2016

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| Sun 4th | 10.00 a.m. | All Age Worship |
| | 6.30 p.m. | United Welcome Service at The Mint MC |
| | | Superintendent Rev Steve Santry and |
| | | Probationer Rev Yangsun Yi |
| Tue 6th | 7.30 p.m. | Home Group Meets - Venue to be confirmed ** |
| Sat 10th | | Plymouth & Exeter District Representatives |
| | | Synod meets |
| Sun 11th | 10.00 a.m. | Morning Worship |
| | 6.30 p.m. | Evening Worship |
| Tue 13th | 7.30 p.m. | Circuit Meeting at The Mint MC |
| Thu 15th | 2.00 p.m. | Monthly Bible Study in the lounge ** |
| Sun 18th | 10.00 a.m. | Morning Worship |
| | 6.30 p.m. | Evening Worship |
| Tue 20th | 10.00 a.m. | Roundabout Cafe Meets (until 12pm) |
| | 7.30 p.m. | Home Group meets - venue to be confirmed ** |
| Sat 24th | 10.00 a.m. | Bring Harvest items to decorate the Church |
| Sun 25th | 10.00 a.m. | Harvest Festival |
| | 6.30 p.m. | Harvest Festival |
| Tue 27th | | Harvest 'Bring & Share' social - to be confirmed |

**** Details in this newsletter or on the notice board in the hall.**



Weekly Activities

Sunday

- 10.00 a.m. Morning Service and Young Church
(1st Sunday in each month is All-Age Worship)
6.30 p.m. Evening Service
(2nd Sunday in each month is Prayer & Praise)

Monday

- 7.30 p.m. Away Group Bible Study (33 Matford Ave)
Girls' Brigade (4 - 16 year olds) 5.45 to 7pm ***A***

Tuesday

- 9.15 a.m. Weekly Prayers in the Quiet Room
10.00 a.m. Men's Coffee and Games Morning
10.00 a.m. The Roundabout Café *(3rd Tuesday each month)*
7.30 p.m. Home Group Bible Study Meeting *(fortnightly)*

Thursday

- 2.00 p.m. Bible Study *(3rd Thursday each month)*

Friday

- 9.30 a.m. Friday Toddlers Group ***A***
2.00 p.m. Friday Fellowship in the lounge

Saturday

- 8.30 a.m. Monthly Prayer Breakfast *(3rd Saturday each month)*

To be sure these take place see Dates to Note or the Notice Board

(***A*** = No meeting during school holiday)

The deadline for items for the October 2016 Newsletter will be Sunday 11th September 2016. There is no guarantee of inclusion, but they may be given to:

Andrew Jackson - 19 Hills Orchard, Martock, Somerset. TA12 6DF.
Tel: 01935 826072 or e-mailed to andrew.m.jackson@me.com