

Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

March 2023

(No: 517)



Minister: Rev Ben Haslam (01392 256716)



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Fairtrade church

The **Methodist** Church 

www.wonfordmethodistchurch.org.uk



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A Message From The Minister

Dear Friends,

Let's look at the Psalms!

For the next few editions, I'm going to exploring some of the Psalms. Not all of them, just a selection of ones which I consider best illuminate some key themes. For now though, let's introduce ourselves to the Psalms and ponder on what they are all about. The Hebrew name for the book of Psalms is Tehillim, which means 'praises' and in the Psalms we have jubilant songs of praise as well as expressions of love and trust in an ever-faithful God. There are darker moments too. Sometimes the Psalmist walks through 'the valley of the shadow of death' but even in these moments, God is still present. The language is poetical, beautiful and honest – sometimes alarmingly so. Every human emotion is on display – the point, it seems, is that there is nothing which cannot be placed before God in worship.

Throughout the Psalms, there are four main ways of addressing God. The first way is simply shouting, 'You are great' and shouting from the rooftops about God's power and faithfulness. The second is to cry 'help!'. Crises in the nation and in the Psalmist's own life are not hidden but brought before God in the full confidence that God is able to act decisively in the lives of His people. We in the modern church often lose sight of the fact that God is a God who is able to intervene in our lives and our churches (though not necessarily in the way we want or expect) so perhaps we could learn from the Psalms here. Thirdly, the Psalmist is frequently moved to say to God, 'I trust You', even (perhaps especially) when life is tough. A former Dean of Westminster once wrote that our two main tasks as Christians are to learn to love and trust our creator. The writers of the Psalms would have agreed. Fourthly, there is a lot of thanksgiving. Gratitude is the undercurrent to many of the Psalms, often because God has taken action to deal with a situation, but also because God is good, even if the circumstances aren't, and is always to be trusted. Some of the Psalms, particularly towards the end of the book, bring the whole of creation into the picture, painting a joyous picture of everything, seas, mountains, creatures and humans basking in God's glory and returning thanks and praise. Why not use the Psalms in your own prayer time? Trust me, however you're feeling, and whatever is going on in your life, there's a Psalm for you!

With every blessing
Ben Haslam

Dates For March 2023

Coffee

5th	Jenny S & Jenny H
12th	Terry L & Margaret D
19th	Janett & Melanie
26th	Pauline & Liz



Bible Study Group

Our fortnightly Friday Bible Study Group meets in our Lounge at 3pm to 4.30pm. In March they meet on the 3rd and 17th. They are currently learning about the Disciples. Please do join them if you are able.

Monika

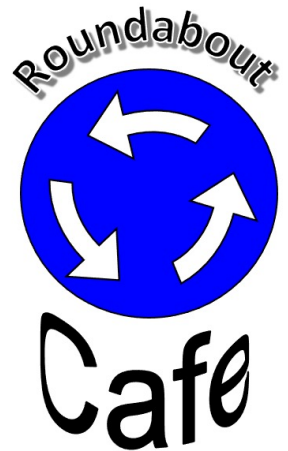
The Away Group

This group meets on a Monday evening every fortnight at 7.30 pm. Dates and venues will be given out each Sunday in the notices.

Roundabout Café

The Roundabout Café will meet on Tuesday 21st March 2023 when there will be a talk on 'The Story of Wonford Methodist Church from its early beginnings in 1840 to the present day'.

We meet from 10.00am until noon with coffee and cake. Everyone is welcome.



Themed Preaching at Wonford

This continues into March and April

This Spring we are looking at the 'People Who Met Jesus'.

Mar 5th	The Paralyse Man (All-Age)	Monika Noronha
Mar 12th	The Rich Ruler	Terry Spencer (S)
Mar 19th	Women with Perfume	Caroline Colin
Mar 26th	Criminals at the Cross	Joan Wragg

Apr 2nd

Palm Sunday (All-Age)

Mary Hext

Apr 9th

Easter Day (Resurrection)

Ben Haslam (S)

Church Green Team

‘Appreciating God Through His Creation’ (Psalm 104 - New Living Translation)

Let all that I am praise the Lord. O Lord my God, how great you are!
You are robed with honour and majesty. You are dressed in a robe of light.
You stretch out the starry curtain of the heavens; you lay out the rafters of your home in the rain clouds. You make the clouds your chariot; you ride upon the wings of the wind. The winds are your messengers; flames of fire are your servants. You placed the world on its foundation so it would never be moved. You clothed the earth with floods of water, water that covered even the mountains.

At your command, the water fled; at the sound of your thunder, it hurried away. Mountains rose and valleys sank to the levels you decreed. Then you set a firm boundary for the seas, so they would never again cover the earth. You make springs pour water into the ravines, so streams gush down from the mountains. They provide water for all the animals, and the wild donkeys quench their thirst. The birds nest beside the streams and sing among the branches of the trees.

You send rain on the mountains from your heavenly home, and you fill the earth with the fruit of your labor.

You cause grass to grow for the livestock and plants for people to use.

You allow them to produce food from the earth—wine to make them glad, olive oil to soothe their skin, and bread to give them strength.

The trees of the Lord are well cared for— the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. There the birds make their nests, and the storks make their homes in the cypresses. High in the mountains live the wild goats, and the rocks form a refuge for the hyraxes. You made the moon to mark the seasons, and the sun knows when to set.

You send the darkness, and it becomes night, when all the forest animals prowl about. Then the young lions roar for their prey, stalking the food provided by God. At dawn they slink back into their dens to rest.

Then people go off to their work, where they labour until evening.

O Lord, what a variety of things you have made! In wisdom you have made them all. The earth is full of your creatures.

Here is the ocean, vast and wide, teeming with life of every kind, both large and small.

See the ships sailing along, and Leviathan, which you made to play in the sea. They all depend on you to give them food as they need it.

When you supply it, they gather it. You open your hand to feed them, and they are richly satisfied.

But if you turn away from them, they panic. When you take away their breath, they die and turn again to dust.

When you give them your breath, life is created, and you renew the face of the earth.

May the glory of the Lord continue forever! The Lord takes pleasure in all he has made!

The earth trembles at his glance; the mountains smoke at his touch.

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live. I will praise my God to my last breath!

May all my thoughts be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the Lord.

Let all sinners vanish from the face of the earth; let the wicked disappear forever.

Let all that I am praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!

Liz

Green Team (Alison Hobbs, Alison Howell, Helen Moore, Martin Lloyd, Sue Keatt, Liz Simonetti)

Wonford Welcome Drop-in and Warm Spaces on Saturday mornings.

As part of the Exeter's 'warm welcome spaces' initiative to help people keep warm & in touch with others this winter, we are continuing to extend our opening times from 10.30am - 1.30pm and we are providing cheese on toast, soup and a roll or beans on toast for 50p. Our application for 'warm space' funding from Exeter City Council was successful and we received £500 - some of this has been used for equipment, food hygiene certificates and posters/flyers with about £300 left to go towards the cost of heating the church hall.

In March we will be having the following activities for you to join if you would like alongside the free cuppa & cake:

4th March - in honour of St David's Day we will have a Welsh themed morning with Welsh craft, Welsh cakes, music from Welsh male voice choirs and Tom Jones (singing along is optional!).

11th March - there will be a Games Morning so come along and play pool, table football and a game of darts or one of our seated table-top games.

18th March - we will be card making and preparing posies for Mothering Sunday.

25th March - we are planning a morning of poetry so bring along your favourite poem to share and maybe have a go at writing your own.

Wonford Welcome is open to all; everyone, whatever their age or beliefs, will receive a warm welcome! If you are able to spread the word, put up a poster or share it on social media please do. And if you haven't been along yet please do come and join us one Saturday!

Helen, Liz, Mandy, Paul, Rose, Sue K and Monika & Lisa.

Prayer Focus for March

Prayer – Our Strongest Weapon – Pray Without Ceasing

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

Romans 8:26-27

As you will see, this month's Prayer focus looks a little different. 24/7 Prayer have produced this guide to help us pray for events in the news. We may find praying for disasters such as the earthquake in Turkey and Syria quite overwhelming. This guide helps us to focus more clearly on all kinds of aspects of such a disaster. And it can be applied to all kinds of situations.

How to Pray for Breaking News stories

1. Get Informed

Gather the basics of the story from a trustworthy source. What's happening? Where? Who is affected? Who are the key leaders and who will be responding? What are the needs right now?

2. Pray for People

Pray for those who are negatively affected. Pray for those who have lost their families, friends and loved ones. Pray for those who are still in danger.

3. Pray for the Circumstances

What are the problems that only God can fix? Ask God to intervene and for God's presence to be felt.

4. Pray for those in Power

Who are the decision makers that can impact the story? Pray for mercy, compassion and wisdom as they deal with the situation.

5. Pray for the Church

Who can spread God's love and God's hope in the situation? Pray for pastors, churches and non-government organisations; that they would be equipped with all they need in the situation.

6. Motivate Others

If you're organising group prayer for the story, find connections and make the story relevant and personal – this will aid and equip your prayers.

7. Share your Prayer

Use social media to share your prayers, and inspire others to add their 'Amen' too.

Source: 24/7 Prayer. Used with permission.

Our Prayer Phone Link

Should you, or those you know, wish to be supported in prayer, the first contact is now Lisa Thomas (01392 273220). 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 Rose Smith (01404 510853).

After Service 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

Re-Live The Moment - TOGETHER

Twenty years ago, Court Hey Church members in Liverpool, generously helped the Shoe Box appeal by packing 150 shoe boxes with gifts of toiletry, toys, books, scarves, socks, sweets etc., I arranged for Rev Ashley Cooper, a young minister nearby to come and collect them. Steward Harry Wright and I carried those 150 boxes to Ashley's car, and Ashley drove off to a port in Wales to deposit them for distribution worldwide to needy people.

Recently, I met Ashley again, and we vividly re-lived that special moment! Ashley is now the Principal of Cliff College, and he was giving some inspired teaching to a conference of Methodist folk from the South West. One theme was: The Challenge to Re-Build the Church.

On a screen, Ashley showed the truly moving photo of the jet plane that was remarkably landed (or ditched!) by pilot "Sully" Sullenberger on the freezing Hudson River in January 2009. The picture showed all 155 passengers standing on the plane's wings waiting to be rescued by boats. All amazingly survived!

The effect on those survivors was immense! People who had never known each other before, became totally united because of that miracle landing. They became **BONDED** by monthly reunions. They wanted to share their experience with each other. They vividly re-lived the moment – **TOGETHER!** In fact, on the 5th anniversary, these passengers (who had now become close friends) went back to the Hudson River, and sailed to the exact spot where they had been wonderfully rescued.

The Christian Church in our country is having a tough time right now. So many churches have closed because of the pandemic, or the struggle to meet present-day cost of living. Many Christian congregations have decreased, there is a shortage of ministers and leaders, and some individual members have lost heart. How will we re-build Christ's Church?

We could start by each member vividly recalling that uplifting moment, or time, when he or she first believed in Christ, when Christ became No 1 in our lives, when our faith was at its strongest. We should make time to meditate on the Cross, because that's where Jesus rescued us from our sins! Then we can plan an act of worship where we **ALL** re-live that moment in our lives **BONDED `TOGETHER!**

Do you remember that memorable occasion when Jesus asked His disciples who they thought He was? Only Peter knew the answer. “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God!” And Jesus instantly replied, “With that kind of faith, Peter, I will build my Church!” So re-live that moment in **YOUR** life – **TOGETHER** with others! Jesus wants to re-build His Church where you are.

**“Knowing You, Jesus, There is no greater thing,
.....And I love You, Lord!”**

Can you pinpoint the time when Jesus first became real to **YOU**?

Rev Malcolm Carter

A Prayer for the Tragic Events in Turkey and Syria

God of time and space, we cry to you for your children - our neighbours - in southern Turkey and northern Syria, following the earthquake that has devastated hundreds of lives. Only they and you know what it is like to experience such trauma in the middle of the night.

We give thanks for the aid that is already being given and for the promises of help that have been made by many nations.

Comfort, we pray,
those who are trapped in collapsed buildings;
those who have lost loved ones;
those who wait for news and
those digging through rubble to save others.

Grant the gift of hope so that those caught between life and death know that you are with them and that others are ready to support them as they seek a future that overshadows the experiences of today.

We ask this in the Name of Jesus, who endured so much for love of them.

Amen.

Prayer written by the President of the Conference, the Revd Graham Thompson.

The Ukraine War One Year On - A Personal Story

On 24 February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine. In the days and weeks that followed, millions of people left their homes to flee the conflict, most of them women and children. It is the largest refugee crisis in Europe since World War II.

Yulia Starodubets is an ordained Methodist Minister who left the capital Kyiv early in the war for the safety of west Ukraine.

Here, she has been working to support others escaping the conflict.

Although the fighting is currently less fierce than it was last year, it is still not possible to relax as each day brings more sad news. We follow the events and we pray.

Since the war began, our support has become more organised. We provide shelter for 50 people a day, some are here for a short period of time, some for longer. We try to take care of them both physically and psychologically. We have people who were on the front line who have been badly injured and are missing limbs, these and their families need urgent help and rehabilitation.

We have received support from many Methodists around the world. Our shelters cared for 600 people in the first months and we would not have been able to continue this without help. We have been supported by the Methodist Church in Britain and other churches, including the United Methodist Church. Without the global Methodist family's help, we would not be able to do these things.

We have a good team here in Western Ukraine but they are tired. We pray for each other, we encourage each other, and we move forward.

The main problem now for civilians is electricity. Across Ukraine it is only available for about six hours each day during the morning and at meal times. This makes living difficult.

I tried to go back to Kyiv several times thinking it would be more peaceful now. It was for a while but it's become dangerous again with missile attacks. I decided not to move back because I have children. In the beginning of the war, when we took them from our home, they asked us why Russia tried to attack us. "They're so huge why do they need more land?"

The children pray with us each evening for peace and for justice.

To have our land returned and to have stable peace in our country. We ask you to pray for our ministers who are exhausted. For those Ukrainians who are being hosted in the UK, I ask you to pray for them not to lose hope and that they will come back home to us soon.

Dates For Your Diary

March 2023

Fri 3rd	3.00 p.m.	Friday Bible Study Group meet in the lounge **
Sat 4th	10.30 a.m.	Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 5th	10.00 a.m.	All Age Worship and Themed Preaching Monika Noronha **
Sat 11th	10.30 a.m.	Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 12th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Terry Spencer - Sacrament. Themed Preaching **
Fri 17th	3.00 p.m.	Friday Bible Study Group meet in the lounge **
Sat 18th	10.30 a.m.	Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 19th	10.00 a.m.	Caroline Colin - Themed Preaching **
Tue 21st	10.00 a.m.	Roundabout Café (until 12pm) **
Sat 25th	10.30 a.m.	Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 26th	10.00 a.m.	Dr Joan Wragg - Themed Preaching **
	6.00 p.m.	Chris Carter - Café Church

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



The deadline for items for the April 2023 Newsletter will be Sunday 12th March 2023. 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

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 (*not every week*)

Monday

7.30 p.m. The Away Group meets (*Fortnightly*)

Tuesday

10.00 a.m. The Roundabout Café (*3rd Tuesday each month*)

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

9.30 a.m. Friday Toddlers Group ***A***

3.00 p.m. Fortnightly Bible Group in the Church Lounge

Saturday

10.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m.

Wonford Welcome Drop-In and

Warm Spaces light lunch.

Tea, coffee and biscuits are free.

Light lunch is available for 50p.

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