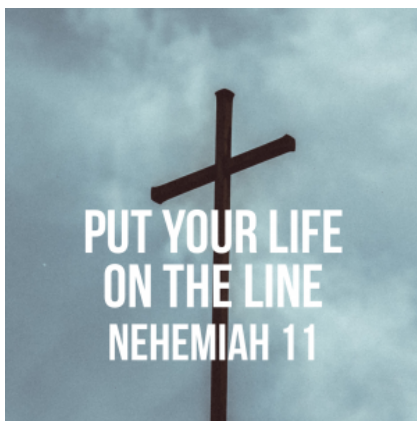


Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

November 2022

(No: 514)



Minister: Rev Ben Haslam (01392 256716)



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The **Methodist** Church 

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A Message From The Minister

Dear Friends,

Nehemiah 11 is not, I have to say, a gripping read. It's just a list of names. It may have been significant to those who knew these people but doesn't seem to say much to say to us today. In fact, I nearly didn't bother to write anything on it at all, skipping ahead to chapter 12. I had forgotten that all scripture is God-breathed, and every single syllable is important, even the bits that sometimes leave us baffled. Take Nehemiah 11 as an example. The phrase, 'the Holy City' is used only 5 times in the whole of scripture and two of those are in this chapter. This must be significant. This Holy City, Jerusalem lies in ruins. Once a beacon to the world, the sight of the great Temple, containing the holiest of holies, symbolising the very presence of God. After the exile of the Israelites, this city became desolate, empty and bleak. Now that the rebuilding and restoration of Jerusalem has begun, the city obviously needs a decent population to make it come alive again. The trouble was, nobody wanted to go. The Israelites had made new lives for themselves, farming the land they had found themselves in, and making more money for themselves than if they returned to city life. Some volunteered to go back, but the rest had to be chosen by lot. It's astounding, really. God's Holy City needs people, fallible mortals such as you and I, or it is nothing. God chooses to make Himself known in the world through His people.

This is no less true today. We are the Church, the body of Christ on earth. When people talk about 'the Church', they usually mean either a building or an institution. We hear people talking endlessly about how the church needs to be 'reshaped for mission', restructured, reorganised, more diktats, more bureaucracy, more statements about current affairs, in order to be relevant. As if the Church has declined in this country because it isn't organised properly. What rubbish. If the church is declining, it's because people have turned away from, or have never encountered, the gospel – new life in Christ. We don't need more programmes and initiatives, we need to see conversions, new people coming to follow Jesus Christ, more people beginning the joyous journey to eternal life, having realised that Christ makes this possible for them. God can use even flawed church systems and structures, but it's a different story if new people are not coming to faith, whilst those who are Christians slowly die off. I'm talking about revival. Every so often, the body of Christ needs re-energising, re-vitalising, new life poured into it. This is just such a time. After a long period of desolation, Jerusalem was built up, reinhabited, made alive again. The same can happen to today's church – if we pray for it, expect it and plan for it. God is in the business of rebuilding ancient ruins, and there is always hope.

With every blessing
Ben Haslam

Dates For November 2022

Coffee

6th	Elaine & Graham
13th	Janet D & Melanie
20th	TBA
27th	Liz & Pauline



Bible Study Group

Our fortnightly Friday Bible Study Group meets in our Lounge at 3pm to 4.30pm. In November they meet on the 11th and 25th. They are continuing to study the Bible with the help of the 'Holy Habits' material. 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.

Wonford Welcome Drop-In (10.30 am – 12.00 pm)

We continue to enjoy meeting each week to share good conversations & optional activities over a cuppa and cake – anyone is welcome to drop in! After receiving quite a few photographs from folk at Wonford with the theme 'God through the lens', Mandy asked the group to vote for their favourites and thirteen photos have been chosen to be featured on a new WMC calendar 'Praise Him' 2023, which will be on sale at church very soon. Thank you very much Mandy for all your hard work in putting this together to create our calendar!

Looking ahead, in November we will be supporting the Blythswood shoebox appeal by making up our own or group boxes on the first Saturday and then on 12th November we join the Exeter Blythswood team to help to process gift shoeboxes that have been donated from across Exeter and East Devon (last year they processed just over 1200 shoeboxes that went to people in Ukraine).

19th November we will have a Bring & Buy Sale – please donate any unwanted gifts/ items that look new or just come along to share in a cuppa and maybe buy something. It's a good habit to recycle/re-use items, rather

than always buying new and you may be able to get yourself an early Christmas present.

26th November – for National Tree week we will have a tree quiz and for those who want to you can have a go at creating some leaf art.

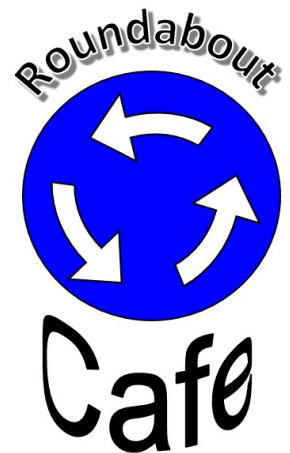
Everyone is welcome to join us each Saturday morning 10.30 – 12.00. In December we will be sharing Christmas traditions, creating decorations & cards and singing carols but more about that in the next month!

Mandy, Liz, Rose, Rev Ben and Sue K

Roundabout Café

The Roundabout Café will meet on Tuesday 15th November 2022 where hopefully there will be a talk by Rev Malcolm Carter entitled '20 Years in Jail'.

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



Themed Preaching at Wonford - Autumn 2022

This Autumn our Themed Preaching Series will be focussed on some of the stories that Jesus told. We've just called it "Jesus the Storyteller". These talks will take place in the morning service from September until Advent. We hope you enjoy and find encouragement in Jesus' use of parables to illustrate the comforts and challenges of our Christian faith.

Nov 6	All-Age Worship	Ann Skinner
Nov 13	The Wise and Foolish Girls Matthew 25 v1-13	Ben Haslam (S)
Nov 20	The Great Banquet Luke 14 v15-24 Matthew 22 v1-18	Paul Smith
Nov 27	First Sunday in Advent	Paul Violet

Give the passages a read-through before the services.

Tony Wragg

Church Green Team - Thoughts & Prayers for November.

7th – 18th November is COP 27 – please pray.



God of blessings,
the universe sings of your glory.
Deepen our gratitude for all you have made
and awaken in us a renewed commitment
to care for the earth and each other.
Inspire world leaders at COP27,
with openness to listen to those most affected by climate change
and with courage to act urgently and wisely,
so that our common home may be healed and restored
and all people, and generations to come, may delight in it.
Amen.

Creator God, who made our beautiful world,
appointed us as its guardians
and gifted us with everything we need,
forgive us
for the times we cause it harm;
for the times our way of life affects our neighbours.
Inspire us
to care for the environment;
to help rebuild lives and communities;
to share in the griefs and anxieties,
joys and hopes of all your people,
so that all your creation may flourish.
Amen.



19th November – World Toilet Day

People often smile or even chuckle at the mention of toilets but this day reminds us that for so many around the world it is certainly no laughing matter. World Toilet Day celebrates toilets, raises awareness of the 3.6 billion people living without access to safely managed sanitation and that every day, more than 800 children die from diarrhoea linked to unsafe water, sanitation and poor hygiene.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 6 is water and sanitation for all by 2030. This year the theme is 'Sanitation and Groundwater' and it focuses on the impact of the sanitation crisis on groundwater. Inadequate

sanitation systems spread human waste into rivers, lakes and soil, polluting the water resources under our feet. However, this problem seems to be invisible because it happens underground and in the poorest and most marginalised communities. Groundwater is our most abundant source of freshwater. It supports our drinking water supplies, sanitation systems, farming, industry and ecosystems. As climate change worsens and populations grow, groundwater is vital for our survival. Safely managed sanitation protects groundwater from human waste pollution. This means everyone having access to a toilet connected to a sanitation system.

Give thanks to the Lord that we each have access to our own toilet, sanitation and clean running water. Pray for those who don't and that charities like WaterAid, water.org and Sanitation & Water for All will work with local partners to try to ensure every person can access to a sanitary toilet.

27th November – the start of National Tree week

National Tree Week is the UK's biggest annual tree celebration. It was originally called Plant A Tree in '73, and started in (you guessed it!) 1973 in response to Dutch Elm Disease - a tree disease that stops them from getting water properly. It's all about getting lots of communities to do more to help their local environment by planting as many trees as they can. It starts in November because this is when the tree planting season starts, it's best for them to be planted as it's starting to get cold. Even though the event only lasts for one week, tree planting season lasts right up until March.

So why are trees important? Trees are a vital part of our ecosystem.

- They take in carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and put out oxygen.
- They help keep our air clean, which is vital to keep climate change under control.
- Nutrients in the soil come from trees, which helps lots of other plants grow.
- Hundreds of kinds of wildlife, like birds, bugs, and squirrels as well as other kinds of plants all live in or on trees. Without them, countless animals would lose their homes or sources of food.
- Plus, trees help protect us from extreme weather. Their long roots and canopy of leaves help prevent flooding and stop soil eroding. Big leaves provide lots of shade when it's very hot and provide shelter when it's very cold, so local temperatures are less extreme.

Oh, and we mustn't forget, — they look beautiful, we often enjoy the sound of them moving in the breeze and kicking our way through the golden fallen leaves in autumn.

Please give thanks to God for trees, take a local walk amongst the many beautiful trees in Ludwell Valley Park and in the former Northbrook golf course or even plant a tree to remember a loved one. And remember, you are never too old to kick up a pile of crisp fallen autumn leaves or hold a colourful leaf in your hand as you marvel at its beauty or even to hug a tree!

Sue Keatt - Church Green Team

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

Harvest Baskets

A huge thank you to all at Wonford for your generosity this harvest time. Melissa and Mirtha were delighted to take receipt of the food items at the Chestnut Children's Centre early in October.

Monika



‘Thank You’ from Margretta

Margretta wants to thank the many of you, who have held in your prayers, her move to live in London. All went well over the 3 days of packing, uploading and offloading, and the weather stayed dry throughout! She's in a similar block of flats to Meyer Court; and has enjoyed chatting in the lounge with others some afternoons. Her task for this winter is to end up with a tidy and pleasing set of rooms!! On Sundays she'll be catching a bus to their 10.30am Service at Winchester Road Methodist Church; which she's only seen from the outside (as she writes this note).

With blessings and many thanks to all at Wonford Methodist, for my 28+ years in Exeter

**Love
Margretta**

Prayer Focus for November

Prayer – Our Strongest Weapon – Pray Without Ceasing

Week Commencing Sunday 6th November

The Lord is close to all who call on him, yes,
to all who call on him in truth.

Psalms 145:18

We pray for all who are struggling to keep warm and fed this winter. Help us to bless the people around us, even if we are finding things difficult too.

Week Commencing Sunday 13th November

Remembrance Sunday

Sing to the Lord, for he has done wonderful things.
Make known his praise around the world.

Isaiah 12:5

We prayerfully remember all who have died in conflicts everywhere down the years. We give thanks for their sacrifice and we pray for peace and for wars and conflicts to cease.

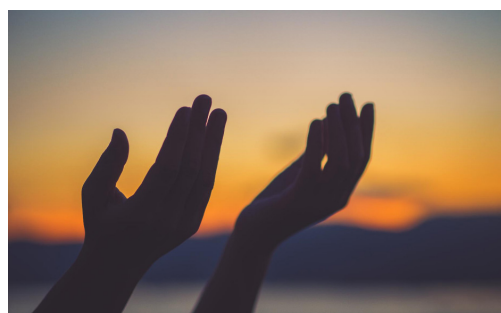
Week Commencing Sunday 20th November

Women against Violence Sunday

God is our refuge and strength,
always ready to help in times of trouble.

Psalms 46:1

We pray for all who suffer abuse and violence of any kind. We pray for the organisations who seek to rescue and protect all who experience violence and to provide places of safety.



Week Commencing Sunday 27th November

First Sunday in Advent

But our citizenship is in heaven.
And we eagerly await a Saviour from there,
the Lord Jesus Christ.
Philippians 3:20

We pray for all our church activities and events during this season of Advent and Christmas. May our words and our actions bring hope to everyone around us.

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

Blythswood Care Shoebox Appeal 2022

Last November, in our Church Hall, the Exeter Blythswood group processed and sent 1216 shoeboxes from Exeter & East Devon to people living in abject poverty in Ukraine. It was wonderful to think that our boxes brought a little bit of happiness to each of the people opening them in December and discovering the gifts inside! Then in February, that became even more poignant when we heard of the invasion and subsequent horrors of war that the people of Ukraine have to endure. Whilst praying for the Ukrainian people we have been imagining some of them wearing a hand knitted scarf or clutching a small teddy bear that may have come from one of our gift-filled boxes as they flee their homes or went in to hiding. We continue to pray for the people of Ukraine – for safety & shelter, reconciliation & restoration and for peace across their land. We are collecting boxes through Blythswood Care again this year.



Blythswood Care is an established Christian charity based in Glasgow, Scotland. They bring hope to families in Europe, Africa and Asia through filled shoeboxes at Christmas, relief and development aid or social projects for young and old. Their motto is 'transforming lives through Christian care for body and soul'.

You need to cover a shoebox in wrapping paper with the lid wrapped separately so it can be opened easily and they can be for adults as well as teenagers and children. The categories are Male or Female; Preschool, Primary, Teenager, Adult or Elderly.

Their website www.blythswood.org will provide a full checklist of items that can be put in the shoeboxes and you can print of a label from there, but if you don't have access to a printer then I can give you a leaflet. The donation towards cost of transporting each shoebox is £3. **Date for final collection at Wonford Methodist is Sunday 13th November.**

Most important items - toothbrush & toothpaste, soap & flannel, hat/scarf/gloves, sweets (dated at least March 2023), a small toy and pencils/pens/paper. Other suggested items for children - a ball, skipping rope, hair accessories, puzzles, stickers. For adults - shampoo, deodorant, comb, sewing equipment, candles (but no matches), kitchen utensils, screwdriver/pliers, pack of cards, small wind up torch and for teenage girls/woman-sanitary products.

To any of our talented knitters, each year we are most in need of scarves, large hats and mittens or fingerless gloves please, for both children and adults. You might like to add in a Christmas card with a message, your name & town/country but do not put in your address. If you have any questions or you want to donate a few items or money instead of filling a box then please let me know - all contributions are very welcome and will help to put a smile on the faces of people who live in such poverty.

Please do contribute if you can. This shoebox may be the only gift they have ever been given and what a Christmas present for someone truly in need!

Sue Keatt

PS. We really do need empty & unwanted shoeboxes to wrap so if you have any then please bring them in!

Dates For Your Diary

November 2022

Sat 5th	10.30 a.m.	Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 6th	10.00 a.m.	Ann Skinner - All Age Worship
Fri 11th	3.00 p.m.	Friday Bible Study Group meet in the lounge **
Sat 12th	10.30 a.m.	Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 13th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Ben Haslam - Sacrament. Themed Preaching
Tue 15th	10.00 a.m.	Roundabout Café (until 12pm) **
Sat 19th	10.30 a.m.	Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 20th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Paul Smith - Themed Preaching **
Fri 25th	3.00 p.m.	Friday Bible Study Group meet in the lounge **
Sat 26th	10.30 a.m.	Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 27th	10.00 a.m.	Paul Violet - First Sunday in Advent

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

December 2022 / January 2023 Newsletter

A reminder that the next newsletter covers December 2022 and January 2023. Can you please get Christmas dates to me - any parties, carol service arrangements, Christmas Eve and Day, circuit events, etc.

The deadline is Sunday 13th December 2022

Advance Notice - Christingle

This takes place on Sunday 11th December 2022 at 4.00 p.m. The plan is to have a workshop for people to make their Christingle. Then a short service explaining about The Christingle. Followed by light refreshments.

**May the LORD bless Ukraine
and keep them; the LORD
make his face shine on them
and be gracious to them;
the LORD turn his face toward
them and give them peace.**

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. Wonford Welcome Drop-In

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 December 2022 / January 2023 Newsletter will be Sunday 13th November 2022. There is no guarantee of inclusion, but they may be given to:

Andrew Jackson - 19 Hills Orchard, Martock, Somerset. TA12 6DF.

Tel: 07818455600 or e-mailed to andrew.m.jackson@me.com