

Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

April 2022

(No: 508)



Minister: Rev Ben Haslam (01392 256716)



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Fairtrade church

The **Methodist** Church 

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A Message From The Minister

Dear Friends,

You learn an awful lot about human nature in the Bible. Look at Nehemiah 5. There has been massive hostility to the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls, and those undertaking this mammoth project had been threatened and abused. Despite all this, with God's help and Nehemiah's leadership, they had overcome and succeeded in their great task. It's human nature to unite against a common enemy (just look at the magnificent resistance shown by the Ukrainian people to the current violation of their territory). However, when there is no external enemy, this feeling of unity can dissolve into self-seeking and selfishness. This is what happens in Nehemiah 5. By this time, there was a severe famine, and people, verging on starvation, were crying out for help. Many were mortgaging their fields to buy food which, as their fields were the source of their income, was a measure of their desperation. People were starving. Others, however, saw an opportunity to exploit those in such dire circumstances, lending them money at interest and so laying up even more problems for them in the future. The Torah, the Jewish law, banned the charging of interest on loans to individuals to prevent this kind of exploitation. God's people were not to profit from each other's distress, one of the many ways in which the Jewish people were called to be a light to the nations, to show the world God's way of living. Only Israel was given this specific and special calling, so if they failed to live up to it, who else was there to take up the task?

Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the notion of the people of God has expanded. No longer does the phrase refer to one nation only, but to all who put their faith in Jesus. This is why the Church is sometimes called 'the new Israel'. Just like the Old Testament Israelites, the Church is called to be a light to the nations, showing (not just telling) the world what human living can look like when opened up to the cleansing, renewing work of the Holy Spirit. Some Christians look at scripture and then say 'this is what the state should be doing', inferring that the Christians's job is to demand that others fulfil what God requires. The Bible sees it differently, being more concerned with conversion, and the way in which individuals and Christian communities live out that conversion. The Church is called, on other words, not to replicate the ways of the world, but to show the world what it means to live a life shaped by joyful worship and service. It would indeed be wonderful to see a society run on Christian lines – but such a society will never exist without that society's members becoming

Christian. Revival and conversion therefore, are two things we need to be praying for constantly. Jesus didn't come to save governments (you might say some of them are beyond saving anyway....), but individual souls. The more people come to faith in Christ, the more lives are transformed by grace, the more positive change we will see in society. To pray for society to change without revival is, ultimately, futile. What good would it be if we achieved a perfectly-run society without the salvation of a single soul? After all, "what will it profit a person if they gain the whole world and lose their soul" (Matthew 16:26)

With every blessing
Ben Haslam

Dates For April 2022

Coffee

3rd	Janette & Margaret S
10th	Melanie & Eileen
17th	David & Madeline
24th	Terry S & TBA



Bible Study Group

This group *usually* meets once a fortnight in the Church of an afternoon from 3pm to 4.30pm. Newcomers will be very welcome to join us. The fortnightly dates for April are Friday 1st and 29th. Sunday Church Notices will remind you and everyone will be welcome!

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. Currently the group are studying the book of Isaiah.

Saturday Morning Fellowship (10.30 am – 12.00 pm)

We have had a good start to our weekly time of fellowship on Saturday mornings in the church hall, where we've enjoyed getting to know more about each other over a cuppa and cake. We brought the table tennis table and table football out from hiding, dusted them off and enjoyed re-discovering the skills of our youth (or for some of us that we need a lot more practice!) ahead of the forthcoming games competition. The magnetic darts is popular and we think we can already see a potential champion in

Barbara! We had a challenging quiz that got us thinking about how Lent is marked around the world and Mandy led us in a gentle 'Mind, Spirit & Flow', as well as a more energetic 'Shake, Rattle & Roll' to 60s music.

We have launched a photo competition and twelve photos will be chosen for a Wonford Methodist Church calendar for 2023 – to enter please send us a photo that show God's love.

We certainly enjoy sharing food so as well as the lovely cakes and biscuits with our cuppa we sampled some Fairtrade goodies during Fairtrade fortnight, then the following week Qamar kindly gave us a Master chef class in how to make an authentic biryani and a very tasty plateful was enjoyed by many of us in a packed hall on the Church Gift Day!

Each week we have a quiet corner for reflection and prayer, as well as something to colour or create and we're delighted to have uncovered a few of our congregation with hidden talents in writing poetry (see one of the poems below, 'Atrocity in Ukraine' written by Malcolm Carter).

Coming up in April we have more music led activities to get you moving, a focus on our wellbeing, a games competition, prayer stations & craft for Holy Week leading up to an Easter egg treasure hunt, some gardening activities and a quiz to test your bird knowledge!

Everyone is welcome to join us and if you would like to help in any way, or have suggestions of things we can do, then please speak with one of us.

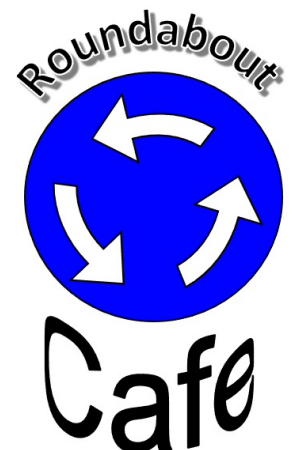
Mandy, Liz, Rose, Rev Ben and Sue K

Roundabout Café

The Roundabout Café will meet on Tuesday 19th April when we will have a talk by Lucy Mottram on

The Challenges of Waste and Recycling in Devon

We meet from 10.00am until noon with coffee and nice things to eat. Everyone is welcome.



Green Team Article

Earth Day 'Invest In Our Planet' – Friday 22nd April

Earth Day, also known as International Mother Earth Day, is celebrated each year on April 22 and this is its 52nd year. The main aim is to raise awareness about the growing concerns of overpopulation, loss of biodiversity, and depleting quality of the environment. The theme this year, "Invest In Our Planet", focuses on the effects of climate change on the planet that we all share and what efforts are being made in the real world to mitigate it. Every government, every business, and every individual in this world has a voice. There is not going to be one person who can do it all but together we can make a difference. As Jane Goodall is quoted as saying "You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."

Sustainability is the answer to sustainable prosperity – it is certainly time to build a sustainable future. So, what do we mean by sustainability and how can we make a difference? Sustainability means meeting our own needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In addition to natural resources, we also need social and economic resources so sustainability is not just environmental-ism.

A Native American proverb says "We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children". As Christians, we know that God has entrusted us to be stewards of the earth and we all have a responsibility to do our best to look after it for generations to come.

One area in which we can all make a change is by looking at our relationship with our clothing and some of the facts about the fashion industry are quite startling.

Did you know that:

- the fashion industry produces 100 billion garments each year for 7 billion people on earth?!
- Britons send over 300,000 tonnes of clothing to landfill. That's enough to fill about 200 Olympic-size swimming pools.
- it takes almost 3,000 litres of water to make one cotton t-shirt and 7,500 litres to make one pair of jeans?
- the fashion industry heavily pollutes water and local communities with toxic chemicals and dyes.
- 40 million people are living in modern slavery today in the world and fashion is the 2nd biggest contributor to this, with child labour common.

- washing synthetic clothing releases micro-plastics and contributes to 35% of the primary plastic that is polluting our oceans
- every year 150 million trees are cut down to make fabrics.

So, what can we do?

- **Buy fewer clothes.** How many clothes and shoes do we actually need?
- **Invest only in clothes you really like** – good quality & from a sustainable source.
- **Wash clothing only when necessary.** Each wash shortens the life of a garment and uses more energy & detergent etc. Clothes will suffer less wear and tear from over washing and you'll keep the clothes you love for longer!
- **Wash clothes like jeans inside out** to keep colour fading & wash on lower heat
- **Use earth-friendly detergents and use less of it each time.**
- **Avoid ironing and hang up to drip dry.**
- **Reuse and repurpose worn or unwanted clothing.** Learn how to mend or up-cycle clothing.
- **Shop second-hand, donate or sell unwanted items** – give it a new home and support charities or make some money for you.
- **Where possible shop locally and use sustainable brands.**

In Exeter, there are a number of organisations and groups who are actively doing their bit to help us live more sustainably.

The management in Princesshay have pledged to where possible installed LED lights on timers to ensure they're turned off overnight, have installed Co-Bikes dock less electric bike hub within Princesshay, directly recycle over 900,000 kilos of waste (87% of all waste generated) with the remainder being turned into refuse derived fuel with nothing being sent to landfill and have made a home for five bee hives housing over 300,000 bees in a secret rooftop garden!

Exeter University recently held a Sustainability week which saw a host of events and activities to encourage everyone to consider a range of environmental issues, and to provide support for people to take positive action in their own lives. This included ensuring students are aware of how they can take part in eco-activism, explaining what they can do to deal with eco anxiety, how Sustainable Development Goals can be embedded into the curriculum, demanding 100% plant-based food in on-campus catering, the best sustainability practices in labs and Waste Innovation to help get to zero waste.

As a Christian organisation, YMCA Exeter acknowledges the cause and effect relationship between human activity, climate crises and their link to current and future homelessness and poverty in various areas of the planet. Their Board of Trustees has adopted a Sustainability Policy and is committed to taking action towards the reduction of its carbon footprint through making conscious decisions and changes in the way they deliver their service to young people and stakeholders.

“Sustainability is no longer about doing less harm. It’s about doing more good” says Jochen Zeitz (CEO of Harley-Davidson). So, what are you doing to make a difference in helping to create a sustainable future for our planet and God’s earth?

Sue Keatt

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

Gift Day Update

We had a very successful launch to our fundraising appeal with a very busy Gift Day and coffee morning on Saturday 12th March.

With promises and Gift Aid we raised £9,087.45 and further Gifts have been received.

A big thank you to everyone for their generous gifts towards our Church Improvement Fund.

You can still make your Gift at any of our services, or at any time during the next two years. Please use the Gift Day envelope to put your Gift in.

If you know of a friend, relative or someone who has been involved in our fellowship and you think that they would be sympathetic to our fundraising please take a Gift Day leaflet for them.

David Westcott
Church Treasurer

Prayer Focus for April

Prayer – Our Strongest Weapon – Pray Without Ceasing

Week Commencing April 3rd

Then Mary took about half a litre of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. John 12:3

Pray for a situation in our world that breaks your heart.

Pray for local Street Pastors and City Centre Chaplains.

Pray for someone close to you who is struggling.

Lord, help me to bless someone this week with my prayers and my actions.

Week Commencing April 10th

'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!' Luke 19:38

Pray for the ongoing problems brought about by the coronavirus pandemic, thinking particularly of health workers and those currently suffering with Covid or Long Covid.

Lord, help me to be careful and thoughtful in my actions and my prayers.

Week Commencing April 17th

'Why do you look here for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!' Luke 24:5b-6a.

As we celebrate the risen Christ, pray for the many Christians around the world who are unable to celebrate freely or in total safety.

Lord, thank you for everything that you have done for me!

Week Commencing April 24th

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Pray that the peace of the presence of Jesus may be evident in our world, our communities and within our own hearts.

Lord, help me to know the peace of your presence in every situation I face this week.

Our Prayer Phone Link

Should you, or those you know, wish to be supported in prayer, the first contact is now Rose Smith (01404 510853). 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 Lisa Thomas (01392 273220) or Margretta Bowstead (01392 437329).

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

Atrocity in Ukraine

*Unfolding daily trauma, the tragedy of Ukraine,
Our TV screens reveal a horror, so cruelly plain;
Bombs blast homes to rubble, many dwellers slain,
Terrified folk attempt escape from their domain,*

*Bombarded residents trapped on their blitzed terrain.
They seek a corridor of relief, but sadly in vain,
Instead, crammed in underground bunkers adds to the strain.
No food, no heat, toilet or light, their spirits drain,*

*From bombing a maternity hospital, Russians won't refrain!
Shocked survivors led out, their terror can't contain.
During rare, brief moments when hostilities wane,
Thousands evacuate to Poland, hard-earned freedom attain;*

*Warm, Polish welcome, plus food and rest, sustain.
One question asked about the sick and old left in Ukraine:
How long before they meet their loved ones again?
Tired troops prepare for onslaught, to fight with 'might and main',*

While Zelensky and his faithful crew, unbowed, remain!

Malcolm Carter, March 2022

Presidential Statement on Ukraine

The overwhelming response to the Government's Homes for Ukraine scheme shows clear support amongst the public for helping those seeking sanctuary. Methodist churches and members around the UK stand ready to open their homes and lives to Ukrainians who desperately need our friendship and solidarity.

The scheme also demonstrates that when called for, the Government can find resources and commit to helping people in need. We are grateful that the Government has listened to the widespread calls for them to act and to begin to open routes by which Ukrainians can come to the UK for safety.

However, whilst communities are united in offering support and protection to those fleeing an unimaginable situation, we remain concerned that this welcoming approach appears to be at odds with the Government's response to refugees from other parts of the world.

Over the past few weeks, non-Ukrainian nationals fleeing the conflict have been treated with hostility across Europe. Many foreign students, refugees who have settled within Ukraine and others who have made Ukraine their home have struggled to find routes out of the conflict, and have instead faced discrimination and harsh treatment. All people fleeing Ukraine need to be offered safety, not only those holding a Ukrainian passport.

In the UK, this hostility is particularly demonstrated in the Nationality and Borders Bill currently going through Parliament. With this Bill, the Government is continuing to pursue a hostile and unwelcoming approach towards some of the most vulnerable people in the world. The Bill will have a detrimental impact on many people seeking refuge, criminalising people with a legitimate claim to asylum, keeping families apart and undermining people's right to refugee protection. The Bill currently presents no new safe routes by which refugees can reach the UK, leaving people fleeing conflict and persecution in places such as Yemen, Syria and Iran without options. At the same time as the Government asks us to open our homes to Ukrainian refugees, they are closing the door on refugees from around the world.

The Refugee Convention was established over 70 years ago in 1951, in the wake of war. Signatories to the convention committed that the way someone travelled to seek refugee protection should not matter, acknowledging that escaping conflict, oppression and persecution was the immediate priority. Despite the risk of war rising once again, the Nationality and Borders Bill directly undermines this principle.

As Christians, we are called to welcome the stranger, and to recognise God amongst them. We cannot abide any kind of discrimination which seeks to ignore or mar the image of God that all people bear. This Bill which judges a person's legitimate claim to sanctuary based on how they arrive in the UK should not be tolerated. Just as the Government is right to make every effort to welcome people from Ukraine, we must ensure that this effort is made whenever necessary.

Any response to people fleeing conflict in Ukraine must now be applied across the board. We urge the Government to look carefully at the Nationality and Borders Bill, recognise this inconsistency, and take immediate action so that all who seek sanctuary are protected.

Dates For Your Diary

April 2022

Fri 1st	3.00 p.m.	Bible Group meets in the lounge **
Sat 2nd	10.30 a.m.	Saturday Morning Fellowship (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 3rd	10.00 a.m.	All Age Worship with Mary Hext
	6.30 p.m.	Café Church - Rev Ben Haslam
Thu 7th	7.15 p.m.	Deacon Becky Lovatt - 'Voices of Holy Week' Lent Study via Zoom
Sat 9th	10.30 a.m.	Saturday Morning Fellowship (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 10th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Ben Haslam - Sacrament (Palm Sunday)
Fri 15th	10.00 a.m.	Good Friday Cathedral Service followed by a creative witness on the green. All welcome
Sat 16th	10.30 a.m.	Saturday Morning Fellowship (until 12.00 pm) **
		Easter Sunday
Sun 17th	10.00 a.m.	Leon Dundas
	6.30 p.m.	Prof Tony Wragg - Easter Praise
Tue 19th	10.00 a.m.	Roundabout Café (until 12pm)
Sat 23rd	10.30 a.m.	Saturday Morning Fellowship (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 24th	10.00 a.m.	Chris Carter
Wed 27th	7.30 p.m.	Pastoral Meeting
Fri 29th	3.00 p.m.	Bible Group meets in the lounge **
Sat 30th	10.30 a.m.	Saturday Morning Fellowship (until 12.00 pm) **

**** 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 *(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***
(Check with organisers before attending)

- 3.00 p.m. Bible Group at the Church *(Fortnightly)*

Saturday

- 10.30 a.m. Saturday Fellowship Meeting

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 May 2022 Newsletter will be Sunday 10th April 2022. There is no guarantee of inclusion, but they may be given to:

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