

Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

February 2018

(No: 465)

trypraying.

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,

give thanks I keep silence I pray I act I read & reflect

What is prayer? At its simplest we might say that prayer is conversation with God. In prayer we talk with God (either out loud or silently, perhaps using words but perhaps also actions or gestures to express our thoughts and feelings). We also try to listen to God (though I know many find this slightly harder!). We might also say that prayer is about being attentive to God. It doesn't need to be something that we always set aside time exclusively for (though it is good to do this) but might occur whilst we are in the midst of other activities as we pay attention to what God would have us do or be in a particular situation.

Prayer was a central part of Jesus' life, either in private or in public. It was the one thing that Jesus' disciples asked him to teach them. I wonder if you've noticed that "pray" is the central part of the rhythms of discipleship that the Methodist Church is being encouraged to embrace over this year? I think this is about more than the fact that if prayer is about conversation and being attentive to God then it can include all of the other parts of the rhythms. It seems to me that "pray" is central because it is central to our ongoing relationship with God – without it, the relationship is neglected, and our discipleship falters.

At Covenant I encouraged each of us to find ways to daily affirm our covenant with God and to walking with him. Prayer is crucial to that. Elsewhere in Contact you will read more about how we as a church will be reflecting and engaging in prayer throughout the coming months through TryPraying. But let me encourage each of you to consider your own commitment to prayer; how central prayer is within your own rhythm of discipleship?

You might like to start by spending some time with James Montgomery's beautiful hymn:

1. Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
uttered or unexpressed,
the motion of a hidden fire
that trembles in the breast.

2. Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
the falling of a tear,
the upward glancing of an eye
none but God is near.

3. Prayer is the simplest form of speech
that infant lips can try;
prayer the sublimest strains that reach
the Majesty on high.

4. Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice,
returning from false ways,
while angels in their songs rejoice
when and cry, "The sinner prays!"

5. Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
the Christian's native air,
our watchword at the gates of death;
we enter heaven with prayer.

6. O thou by whom we come to God,
the Life, the Truth, the Way!
The path of prayer yourself have trod;
Lord, teach us how to pray!

With every blessing
Bruce

Dates For February

Coffee

4th Madeline & David
11th Rose & Paul
18th Fran & Pauline
25th Eileen & Melanie



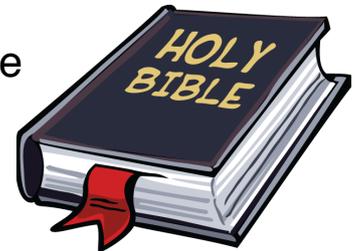
Flowers

4th Alison
11th Roslyn
18th Bronwen
25th Melanie



Minister's Monthly Bible Study Group

This group meets in the lounge at 2pm normally on the third Thursday each month. All are welcome. This month they are studying Job chapter 19.



22nd 2.00 p.m. Bible Study in the lounge.

Home Group

This is the House Group that meets approximately fortnightly, and often hosted generously by Caroline Sawyer at the manse. Do look in the Diary Dates for exactly when we're meeting this month, and we'd love to have you come and join us anytime. In January we've made a good start on studying Paul's letter to the Ephesians, fortunately with a guide book to help us discuss the challenges there.

Monika Noronha

6th 7.30pm At 20 Whipton Lane
27th 7.30pm At 20 Whipton Lane

Our Calling

Our Calling, in the Methodist Church in Britain, is to:

*increase awareness of
God's presence and to
celebrate God's love*

*help people to grow and learn as
Christians through mutual
support and care*

*to be a good neighbour to
people in need and to challenge
injustice*

*make more followers of Jesus
Christ*

Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Acts 2: 46-47

The logo for 'trypraying.' is displayed on a teal rectangular background. The word 'try' is in a dark brown color, 'praying.' is in white, and there is a small white dot at the end of the word.

TryPraying is a simple initiative that encourages people to pray. It's an invitation to people to try praying for seven days and see what happens...!

We will be launching TryPraying during the morning service on 4th February. At this service, everyone will be given the opportunity to take away a small booklet (there are special editions appropriate for children and young people)*. The booklet acts as an introduction to prayer, and to God; it contains some simple prayers, real-life stories, tips on prayer, suggestions to try, and a section that seeks to answer some common questions people might have. The idea is that each of us is encouraged to use it over the course of a week (to familiarise ourselves with it – not because we don't already pray!) and then the following week to give the booklet to someone you know, and encourage them to try praying. For the tech savvy amongst

us, the booklet is also available as an app that you can download to your smartphone or tablet - www.thereishope.co.uk/resource/the-app/).

In order to support this initiative, there will be a number of other activities taking place. The worship team have planned a themed preaching series that will be exploring different aspects of prayer and Biblical prayers (you find details of this series elsewhere in Contact). The prayer team are working on providing an opportunity for those passing the church to pray by tying a ribbon on the fence. We also hope to deliver a simple letter to some of the surrounding streets, offering to pray for any concerns.

The thing that I really love about TryPraying is that what we're trying to do is introduce people straight to God. It's a simple way for each of us to share faith in a way that is non-threatening, that isn't about us being able to explain everything or know all the answers. We simply invite people to try praying, try talking directly with God, and trust that God will



Sunday 25th February 2018
4.00pm
ALL Welcome

Justice EMail

Methodists affirm that one aspect of “Our Calling” is to Service, which includes “challenging injustice”.



There are many issues of injustice in the world, on many different levels, and it can be difficult to know where to begin. I don't know enough about what's going on, we might think. How can I make a difference? It's easy to feel overwhelmed.

This is where Justice Mail can help!

Justice Mail is a simple e-mail system that encourages individuals to take action on issues of injustice. It seeks to support the campaigns of many of the major development and justice organisations in the UK (e.g. Amnesty International, Church Action on Poverty, Labour Behind the Label, Christian Aid, Fairtrade, Greenpeace, Refugee Action, Shelter, WaterAid, Stop the Traffik).

Sign up for Wonford Justice Mail and once a month you will receive an e-mail that provides you with both information about a particular issue, and details of how you can take some simple steps to take action in this area (e.g. signing a petition or sending an e-mail).

Signing up to the Justice Mail list does not commit you to doing anything – each month you are free to decide whether you wish to take action – the e-mail acts as a prompt and provides information.

The creation of a Wonford Justice Mail list has been approved by the Church Council and will be managed by Bill Noronha. To become a part of the list and start taking action, just e-mail Bill: billnoronha@hotmail.co.uk – it's as easy as that!

If you want to find out more, please speak to Bill Noronha or Bruce Sawyer, or visit the website: www.justicemail.org.uk

Girls' Brigade Celebration!

2018 is the 125th anniversary of Girls' Brigade.

We are having a celebration of Girls' Brigade at Wonford on Monday 26th March at 6.00pm.

Past and present GB members and their families are



invited to join us!

If you know anyone who has been involved with Girls' Brigade over the years please let them know about this event.

Thank you

The GB team - Rosie, Monika, Helen, Sarah and Zoe

Women's World Day of Prayer

As usual this is on the first Friday in March. So please note, there will be a special Service at 11.00 a.m. on Friday 2nd March in the Sacred Heart Church on South Street in Exeter, where all men and women are very welcome. Each year the Service is planned by women from a different country, and this year it is by the Christian Women of Suriname, in the north of South America – I had to look it up! It's title is All God's Creation is Very Good; and I hope some of you will be free to enjoy this chance to learn from and worship with others. I haven't yet heard if there is an evening Service in St Thomas area, for those who cannot attend in the daytime.

Margretta Bowstead

The Plymouth & Exeter Methodist District Partnering the Cuttack Diocese, Orissa, India

The Plymouth and Exeter District and the Diocese of Cuttack are seeking to revitalise a link that was forged some years ago. It is hoped that the link will enable us to unite in the Spirit and, through prayer and preaching, remember and encourage the partnership.

Introducing the Diocese:

The Church of North India (CNI) is a united church established in 1970 by bringing together the main Protestant churches working in northern India.

The Diocese of Cuttack is situated in Orissa, one of India's seven poorest states. Approximately 2% of the population of Orissa (estimated at 45m) are Christian. It is an area which retains a heavy Baptist influence from the work of the Baptist Missionary Society. The Rt Rev Surendra Kumar Nanda is the Bishop of Cuttack.



The Diocese is divided into 4 Pastorate Unions, each comprising a number of Pastorates, around 140 congregations, and an estimated 12,500 communicant members.

The Diocese works with partners to support a number of educational establishments, including 5 Stewart Schools, a Skills Centre at Mohana, and teacher training college, as well as a Christian Hospital at Berhampur.

The area includes the large urban populations of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, the coastal tourist resort of Puri with its historic Hindu temple, as well as numerous fishing communities.

Inland, the area is predominantly rural, mountainous and remote. Between 80-90% of the population in this area is made up of scheduled castes (Dalit - the name given to themselves; it means 'broken' or 'crushed') and scheduled tribes (Adivasi).

Challenges for the people:

- ★ The challenges are many, including
- ★ Caste-associated discrimination
- ★ Religious discrimination
- ★ Lack of adequate quality education, for all children, but particularly for girls - around 70% of women in rural India are illiterate.
- ★ Lack of sources of income generation - 37% live below the International Poverty Line
- ★ Lack of adequate medical facilities
- ★ Deforestation, soil erosion and drought mean poor agricultural production
- ★ Effect of globalisation and industrialisation on communities – migration and displacement
- ★ Trafficking of, and violence towards girls and women

Both the Dalit and the Adivasi people suffer discrimination for different reasons: the Dalits in the Indian context are the communities which are considered 'out-castes' - previously 'untouchable'; the Tribal or Adivasi people are thought of as primitive and backward. Together these two groups make up around 25% of India's population and about 85% of India's Christians.

They are socially marginalized, politically under-represented, economically exploited and culturally subjugated. The women are particularly oppressed.

Prayer Points:

1. Please pray for the Churches of the Diocese of Cuttack as they strive to follow Christ in difficult and challenging circumstances.
2. Pray for the Evangelists, as well the Mission and Evangelism desk of the Diocese of Cuttack, as they preach the gospel to the unreached, pray for God's divine protection on them as they face threats to their life and property
3. Pray that the leadership of the Diocese of Cuttack under guidance of the Bishop Nanda, may they be able to know, to discern and to lead in the way that God wants the Diocese to go.

Do You Still Believe That God Speaks To Us In Dreams?

What do Jacob, John, Joseph and the Three Wise men have in common? Well God spoke to them in dreams. In the case of Mary and Joseph it was a warning to flee to safety in Egypt.

During Advent I felt God telling me to listen to Sharon. Sharon was getting more and more agitated with living in the ground floor flat at Rutherford Street. She was going home later and later and was unhappy to be there on her own. It also came to me, whilst driving down the High Street in Exeter, that Exeter was becoming over populated and clogged up with traffic jams.

In February 2017 my darling mother passed to glory. She so looked after me while she lived and now she was going to help me in death. For in her and Ray's Will, they provided for their six siblings. After clearing my debts I had a little money to invest, but what into?

The answer came. We were warned in a dream to get out of Exeter and found ourselves being led to a place called Liverton. It meant nothing to me, except it is on the 38 Bus Route.

The lady who lived there so wanted to sell and move to be with her daughter, so she was open to offers. I only had £50,000 left from my inheritance and my superannuation, so I offered her that and it was just enough.

Over the Christmas period we travelled like Mary and Joseph, not to Bethlehem, but to Liverton. For me it is using my money from mum, etc to provide a place for my retirement in 6 years, for Sharon it is peace haven. For both of us God is taking us to a new chapter in our journey and who knows what He has planned for us.

We decided that the Covenant Service 2018 would be our last Sunday at Wonford Church. You will still see us on the buses and bowling greens in Exeter and we may pop in from time to time.

We thank God for all your wonderful love, especially whilst Sharon and I lost our dear mothers, we thank my mother for looking after us in life and in death and above all we thank God for enabling us to follow our dreams.

May God Bless You All With Sweet Dreams. **Sharon & Nick Goddard**

Try Praying

Our preaching theme for early 2018 will be focussed on Prayer. This will accompany our campaign under the title “Try Praying”, in which we will be challenging people to discover the reality of God for themselves as they simply try praying. We will hear more about this in the coming weeks. For the following texts multiple texts are sometimes listed. These will not necessarily all be used by the speakers, but will make useful background reading. We hope you are encouraged and challenged by this series on one of the most vital areas of Christian experience and practice.

Tony Wragg

Date	Theme	Bible Verse(s)	Preacher
Feb 2 (All Age)	Teach us to pray	Luke 11 vv1-4	Rev Bruce Sawyer
Feb 11	What would you ask for?	1 Kings 3 vv1-15; Col 1 vv9-14	Rev Bruce Sawyer
Feb 18	Prayer and attitude	Ps 51; Job 42vv1-6; Luke18 vv9-14	Monika Noronha
Feb 25	Changing God's mind?	Gen 18 vv16-33; Ex 32 vv9-14	Rev Dave Martin
March 2 (All Age)	Answered prayer	Acts 12 vv1-17	Mary Hext
March 11	Exploratory prayer	1 Kings 8 vv22-53	Rev Bruce Sawyer
March 18	Prayer in despair	1Sam 1; Ps 6; Rom 8 vv18-27	Dr Joan Wragg
March 29 (Maundy Thursday) 6.30pm	Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane	Mt 26 vv36-46	Mandy Denton and Rev Alan Rothwell

The Prayer team are hoping that our fence may again play its part - - - something with ribbons - - - so keep an eye open, and give us a hand if you can!

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Prayer Focus for February

Pray With Thanksgiving

Week beginning 4th.

Pray for Bruce as he leads All Age Worship beginning our themed preaching on Prayer. Pray that all will be blessed & gain a closer walk with our Lord. At 5.30 it is the Film Service showing the film "LION". Please remember during this winter time those who struggle with the cold weather, the elderly, disabled or sick people in our community.



Week beginning 11th. Racial Justice Sunday.

If ever there was a time to pray for Racial Justice it is now! Our morning service will be led by Bruce continuing our themed preaching on Prayer. In the evening it is our Prayer & Praise service led by Caroline Sawyer & Mandy Denton. Please pray for them as they prepare this service.



Wednesday February 14th is the beginning of Lent. This is a time when we can prepare ourselves for the glorious events of Easter and a closer walk with the Lord.

Week beginning 18th.

The 1st Sunday in Lent is led by Monika Noronha. She will continue our theme preaching on Prayer. The evening service is our Café Church. The speaker will be Stuart Barr. Please pray for all the preparations for these services.



Week beginning 25th. The 2nd Sunday in Lent.

We welcome Rev Dave Martin from Plymouth Central Hall to lead our themed preaching on Prayer at 10am. Then at 4pm Messy Church welcomes those who would not normally attend church. Please pray for safe travels for Dave Martin and for hearts to be open to the Lord as they attend Messy Church.



May you all be richly blessed as you pray for all the activities at Wonford , surrounding area & the wider world.

Phone Prayer Link

Should you, or those you know, wish to be supported in prayer, the first contact is now Rev Alan Rothwell (01392 926840). 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 Margretta Bowstead (437329) or Margaret Kearns (679949).

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

News From The Methodist Church

Christmas Message

The President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, The Revd Loraine N Mellor and Jill Baker, have released their 2017 Christmas message on the subject of **visitation**.

Jill:

Visiting is at the heart of Christmas. In the birth of Jesus, God became a guest in God's own world - what an amazing truth that is! The familiar Bible stories which will be told and re-told again this Christmas in churches, schools, homes and on television and radio will remind us of many other visits too; Gabriel visits Mary, Mary visits Elizabeth, the angels visit the shepherds, the shepherds visit the Holy Family, the magi come from distant lands, following a star to visit the new-born King... some of those visits were long-planned, others happened spontaneously. Whether or not we feel organised and "ready" for Christmas now, there is a place for everyone at the manger.

In these first six months in our roles as President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, Loraine and I have also been doing lots of visiting. Between us I think we have been in around 25 different districts for one reason or another, Loraine has also been to Fiji and Uganda, I have been to Ethiopia and, earlier in the year, to Russia. We think we have slept in around 50 different beds in total! We are both so grateful for the hospitality shown to us and the generosity of individuals, churches, circuits and districts who have always made us welcome – who have always ensured

that there is “room at the inn”. Often there have been special little touches to make us feel at home; decaffeinated coffee for both of us, for example!

Lorraine:

Already during this year we have made new friends, spoken with many of our Methodist people, had some challenging and wonderful conversations, visited churches and cathedrals, holiday camps, food banks, palaces, new buildings, historic buildings, homes, shopping centres, new urban villages, rural villages, and so much more. Very recently we joined in with the brilliant 3-Generate weekend in Southport. I loved every minute and learned so much about how our children and young people, all 1200 of them, from all around the Connexion, have so much to offer us and how they want to change the world. They were ‘wonderfully prophetic’ (which was the theme of the weekend) as they made their voices heard and talked about the things they believed God was calling them to and how God was moving through them in the world today. They were truly inspirational; I stood in awe and admiration; that visit has changed me.

So we want to reflect a little further on this idea of visitation as we share greetings with you this Christmas.

The former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Coggan said, ‘When God intends to make something wonderful he begins with a difficulty. When he intends to make something very wonderful, he begins with an impossibility. I often think about the visit which started off the whole story; Gabriel being sent to Mary in Nazareth and wonder what it might have been like from Gabriel’s point of view:

On a very dusty humid day in late April I found myself standing outside a simple home. As I just sort of landed in front of Mary she looked nervous and afraid and backed away. ‘Do not be afraid, I bring you greetings’. I sounded a bit like a taped message so I lowered my voice and changed the script a bit, ‘Mary love, you are going to have a baby... now I know this is a bit of a shock. She looked horrified! ‘This baby is very very special and it's God's son’. By this time she was as white as a sheet; I ploughed on, ‘Mary you have been especially chosen’; I knew what that felt like! Boy was this hard; I was beginning to wonder if she would ever speak to me. ‘God has chosen you to give birth to his Son, you are a special person, you are precious to God’. At that moment the whole atmosphere changed, and at last she spoke, this young girl, this vulnerable, frightened person spoke and her voice was soft and gentle, ‘Me chosen, why?’

Of course we know how the story continues; that visit changed the course of history as Mary found the courage to accept her role. Praise the Lord!

Jill:

Perhaps not quite so dramatically, but at a different level, every visit has the potential to change things. Making each visit count, making each visit special, learning and sharing something significant in each place, is part of the joy and challenge of our year, but perhaps also part of the joy and challenge of this season for all of us. As we receive visitors, can we show the grace and openness that Mary showed; and as we visit others, can we do so with the care of the magi? Christmas might also be a good time to make an unplanned visit – perhaps to someone who will be spending time on their own, or in hospital – let's do that with the enthusiasm of the shepherds!

As we all reflect on the visits we have made in this last year in the light of the Christmas story, I find myself thinking about a shepherd I met on a remote mountainside in Ethiopia in August. Through the work of All We Can and their partner organisation on the ground, he was now rearing a different breed of sheep, which was more profitable. This meeting had a timeless quality about it. It was not difficult to imagine angels appearing, good news being announced, a journey into the nearest town ensuing and I again felt wonder and joy at the ordinariness which runs through the extraordinary story of the birth in Bethlehem. No-one was excluded then. No-one should be excluded now. The shepherd, Gretachew, told us that he was also a part-time priest in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. "You're a shepherd and a priest?" I asked; he nodded, "A bit like Jesus?" I suggested; he beamed.

Lorraine:

This Christmas our prayer is that you might visit the manger once more and know in your hearts the coming of the Christ child, to worship and to hear again this fantastic story of incarnation, of joy and of wonder and give thanks for this marvellous gift and that we might all, through the visits we make and receive, change the world.

*O come all ye faithful joyful and triumphant.
Come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, born the king of angels;
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

Dates For Your Diary

February 2018

Thu 1st	7.00 p.m.	Holocaust Memorial Day Concert - Exeter Cathedral
Sun 4th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Bruce Sawyer - All Age Worship. Themed Preaching 1 **
	5.30 p.m.	Film Service - 'Lion' **
Tue 6th	7.30 p.m.	Home Group meets at 20 Whipton Lane **
Sun 11th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Bruce Sawyer - Sacrament & Themed Preaching 2 **
	6.30 p.m.	Mandy Denton & Caroline Sawyer - Prayer & Praise
Sun 18th	10.00 a.m.	Monika Noronha - Themed Preaching 3 **
	6.30 p.m.	Stuart Barr - Café Church
Tue 20th	10.00 a.m.	Roundabout Cafe meets (until 12pm)
	7.30 p.m.	Church Council meets
Thu 22nd	2.00 p.m.	Bible Study in the lounge **
Sun 25th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Dave Martin - Themed Preaching 4 **
	4.00 p.m.	Messy Church **

Fairtrade Fortnight - 26 February to 11 March

Tue 27th	7.30 p.m.	Home Group meets at 20 Whipton Lane **
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March 2018

Fri 2nd	11.00 a.m.	Women's World Day of Prayer, Sacred Heart Church South Street **
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**** Details in this newsletter or on the notice board in the hall.**

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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
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***

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 March 2018 Newsletter will be Sunday 11th February 2018. 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