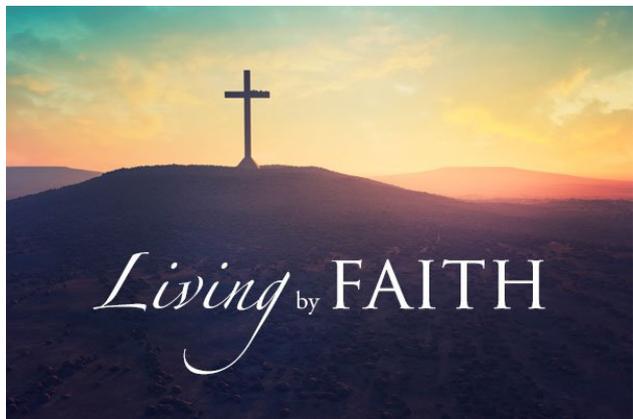


# Wonford Methodist Church

## Contact Newsletter

February 2020

(No: 485)



**Minister: Rev Ben Haslam (01392 256716)**



Wonford is a Fairtrade church  **The Methodist Church**

[www.wonfordmethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.wonfordmethodistchurch.org.uk)

 @WonfordMethodistChurch



# A Message From The Minister

**Dear Friends,**

We have learnt an awful lot from the great sweep of history, and one standout lesson is that where God's kingdom grows and His Kingdom advances, there is always opposition. You can, if you look carefully, see broad patterns within this opposition too and, roughly speaking, you can identify three kinds of 'forces' that oppose Christ and His Church.

Firstly, there is persecution. Horrendous in the earliest days of the Church and still raging fiercely today in many parts of the world. The powers that be of this world cannot cope with the full-throttle, no-holds-barred power of God in its midst and tries, unsuccessfully, to stamp on it.

Secondly (and in our part of the world, this will be more in line with our experience), there is untruth. Belief systems that don't originate in God, and very often seem perfectly good and rational in themselves, make us question whether our faith really is all that God says it is. We half consciously, even unconsciously, move away from understanding our faith as something given, revealed, a gift, towards believing it to be something that we construct. Thus is Living Faith replaced with anxious managerialism.

The third form of attack is what's outrageously called 'sin' – settling for being less than what God intended. Being our own version of good rather than being who God is calling us to be.

The churches that Jesus addressed through John in the book of Revelation in Ch 2-3 struggle with all of these as they try to bear witness to the gospel in sometimes nightmarish circumstances. They don't get everything right. Much of what they lived through, we can't even imagine. For the next seven months, this bit of the newsletter will be a short reflection on the message given to each of these churches. It's a ridiculously short space in which to do this – but I hope it will help you to encourage you to reflect on these challenging messages and ponder what they might have to say to us today.

So – the first church – Ephesus (Revelation 2. 1-7) The Ephesians are a hard working, efficient bunch. They've got the 'doing' thing down to a fine art. They have hung on to the integrity of their faith too, in a world with many competing belief systems and pressure to opt for a faith more acceptable to the powers that be. They resist and are commended for it. This is no mean

feat, and there is nothing hollow or glib about Jesus' praise of their integrity. It is truly astonishing, given the circumstances.

In all their activity – their 'doing' however, their 'being' has suffered. The love they first discovered in Christ Jesus, the 'love they were born to know' in John Betjeman's lovely phrase, has blown away like sand in the wind and revealed bare rock beneath. If only they had realised that being and doing are two sides of the Christian coin, that we have nothing of value to give if we are not nurturing our own relationship with Christ and opening ourselves to His love – His love note, not our weak imitation of it, in every part of our lives. Christian faith isn't just about what we do. It's about being changed inside. It's about becoming Christ-like, and that can only happen through the work of the Holy Spirit inside us. Christian faith begins inside us and then works its way outwards. Our doing flows from our being. Doing unnourished by being becomes hard, arid and mechanical. It doesn't delight God. It's the same with doctrine. This much the Ephesians learnt. Yet when good Christian practice and right Christian belief, both issuing from a deep love for God become evident, there is singing and dancing in heaven. We see in Revelation churches settling for just one of these and neglecting the rest and getting a sharp rebuke for it. God is relentless in urging us on to the very best – because He is perfect love and can do no other.

Today, you can still see the ruins of ancient Ephesus. Massive public buildings. Houses. Shops. A Gladiator's graveyard. The Temple of Artemis. Archaeologists eventually found the ruins of a church. There are however, no remains of a church later than the period this letter was written and no active churches in the area to this day. God did indeed take away their lampstand.

**With every blessing**

**Ben Haslam**



# Dates For February 2020

## Coffee

2nd	Alison Hobbs & Melanie
9th	Elaine & Graham
16th	Alison Howell
23rd	TBA



## Flowers

2nd	Melanie
9th	TBA
16th	Liz
23rd	Jenny



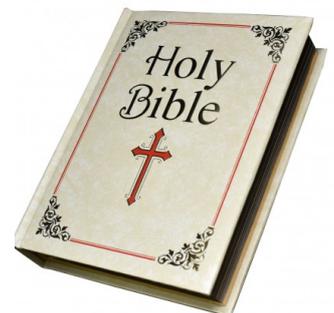
## Home Group

This group is now meeting fortnightly on Wednesday evenings at 7.30 pm in different members' homes, as our Sunday Screen Notices will tell each time. They will be studying The Life of Paul this spring. Come with your questions or thoughts to help us, please!

12th February	18 Tuckfield Close
26th February	39 Meyer Court

## Minister's Bible Study

This is led by Rev Ben Haslam each month and includes some discussion. It is usually held on the 3rd Thursday afternoon at 2pm in the church lounge, and lasts about an hour. Please check the monthly Dates or church Notices each month. All are welcome!



**Next Meeting      Thursday 20th February 2020**

## Away Group

This is the Bible Study Fellowship Group that meets every week, usually at Joan and Tony's or at Julie and Alan's. But a lot of you are missing it!!! Why not come and join with them on Monday nights at 7.30pm?



The Christian “Season of Celebration 2019” took place between September 1st and October 4th. The theme for 2019 was bio-diversity and celebrating it as a part of creation given and sustained by a loving God.

During the autumn the Wonford Book Club read the History of Bees by Maja Lunde. The book portrayed three different generations of beekeeping from the past, the present and into the future.

The past generation focused on the development of the modern bee-hive. The present looked at Colony Collapse Disorder. This real problem sees worker bees abandoning a hive leaving the colony to eventually die. The effect of this decline on agriculture and the economy is immediate and marked. The future generation imagines a world where bees and pollinating insects have completely disappeared. In this imagined world humans must take over the bees’ role and children are trained in the painstaking process of pollinating by hand as soon as they go to school.

Without adequate pollinators famine sets in on a vast scale and society itself begins to collapse. The book is a novel but it portrays a disturbing picture of what might happen if we do not care for the natural world around us.

Pollinators include bees, butterflies, hoverflies, beetles, moths and some wasps amongst other insects. Today there is concern about their decline in numbers. The decline has been put down to many factors such as loss of habitats, lack of flowering plants and parasites. Other factors include climate change, modern farming practice and use of pesticides. Over 80% of flowering plants depend on animal pollinators. Plants make up the basic components of all eco-systems and any changes to the health and population of pollinators can all affect plant species and threaten the natural systems and diversity that nature provides.

Private gardens can have a rich diversity of plants and provide much support to bees and a wide number of pollinators. There can be more pollinators in gardens and urban areas than surrounding rural farmland. We can help support pollinators in any garden by introducing more nectar and pollen rich plants, allowing some lawn weeds to reach flowering, providing some water in a shallow vessel, avoiding using pesticides especially around open flowers and providing undisturbed areas where bees may nest, such as in bare soil and under wood. Caring for the smallest of insects can have

a big effect on the environment and demonstrates the unique value that creation places on all creatures and species.



**Martin Lloyd**  
**Church Green Team**

## **The Big Green Event**

This takes place on the 22nd February at Exeter Cathedral from 10am-4.30pm. A one-day festival of thought and action to join up faith and the environment – and inspire us to make a difference. Keynote speaker: Bishop Nick Holtam, Bishop of Salisbury and lead bishop for environmental affairs. Workshops: Science, theology, food, direct action, buildings & Eco-church, biodiversity, global perspective & the Lent Book as well as a creative corner, seminars, panel discussion and more.

Eventbrite booking to follow, or contact [chris.keppie@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:chris.keppie@exeter.anglican.org)

## **The OtB/Open the Book**

This team of Anglicans & Methodists act out Bible stories fortnightly on Tuesdays at CW/Countess Wear Primary School Assemblies, and practise them at Wonford MC the Tuesdays in between. We would be delighted for anyone free on Tuesday afternoons to join our OtB Team. Our next few weeks have on:



February 4th	2.45pm	'Jesus and the Children' at CW School
March 3rd	2.00pm	'Jesus and the Taxman' WMC rehearsal
March 10th	2.45pm	'Jesus and the Taxman' at School

*Rev Terry Spencer, Margretta, Karen, Bill and David Salter.*

## **Giving Graciously**

I have been the Treasurer of Wonford Methodist Church for over 10 years and I have been amazed at the generosity of everyone. We are a truly blessed fellowship.

We are part of the body of Christ and as such we should take our responsibilities seriously by displaying God's love and grace to those we meet. A healthy church is built on firm spiritual foundations and equally firm financial foundations as well.

## **Financing the Church**

It costs about £783 per week to run Wonford Methodist Church and is made up as shown below.

<b>Weekly Cost (in £)</b>	
Electricity for the church and hall	12
Gas for heating and hot water	30
Water for kitchen use and toilets	10
Monthly Newsletter	10
Insure the Church and Hall	32
Preaching fees and travelling for visiting preachers	7
Our Circuit contribution for Ministers & Manses	608
General Property Maintenance	27
Materials etc for Young Church	2
Donations we make to other charities	26
Money we use specifically for Mission & Outreach	11
Cost of Copyright Licences	8

Our offerings amount to £652 so you can see there is a bit of a gap. Part of that gap is made up by the money we get from our PV cells, the money we receive from our Trustees and lettings, however there is still a gap.

Over the past couple of years our expenditure has exceeded our income so we are running a deficit budget. Ideally, we should be able to balance our books and any additional income (over our expenditure) can be used to fund major projects.

Our Church is supported by the generosity of our fellowship and through

that generosity we support lots of other charities. During the last financial year we supported over 20 different charities both financially and by donating gifts.

In addition have a magnificent set of buildings, a varied and dynamic team of worship leaders, and a large number of thriving activities which provide Christian outreach and witness in our community and encourage and strengthen our own fellowship in their faith.

In simple terms to balance our books we need to increase our income.

We have about 83 church members; some are young people not earning, some are retired and on a fixed income and some are not working. In addition our congregation changes with people joining the church and people moving on.

Some people are giving as much as they can and God bless you for that! Some review their giving on a regular basis and increase their giving if they are able and that's wonderful too.

Here are three ideas to think about:

When did you last review how much you give? Many people increase their offering on a regular basis.

The envelope scheme or contributing your offering by standing order encourages regular giving. Gift Aid boosts our income by thousands of pounds a year so if you pay income tax make sure you let us know.

Please remember, the cost of running the church is the same whether you attend or not.

Think prayerfully about whether you could manage to give a little more.

It is always difficult to ask people to give more to church funds, but we feel that a small increase in contribution from each of our fellowship would result in us being able to balance our books and a big improvement in our ability to finance major projects.

***David Westcott (Treasurer) on behalf of the Church Council***

## **Our Theme Preaching at Wonford for Spring; Christianity Explored**

This series continues into February and March. We are actually going to be following the Christianity Explored course and the “sermons” will come to us on screen and will be presented by Rev Rico Tice. Rico is an Anglican minister, conference speaker and evangelist based at All Souls Church, Langham Place, London, He is also very keen on rugby and is a non-executive director of Christians in Sport. Of course a minister/local preacher will be with us to present the other elements of each service in the usual way. So here’s what to expect

Feb 9th	Sin	Rev Alan Rothwell
Feb 16th	The Cross	Rev Ben Haslam
Feb 23rd	Resurrection	Dr Joan Wragg
Mar 8th	Grace	Prof Tony Wragg
Mar 15th	Come and Die	Caroline Colin and Mandy Denton

This is something of an experiment so we are limiting it to just seven weeks. Let us know what you think in due course.

**Tony**  
**For Worship Team**

### **Church Council Meeting**

The next Church Council meeting is on Tuesday 25th February 2020 at 7.30pm in the Church.

All are welcome to come and join in the discussions, you don't have to be a Member. Please note only church council members can vote.

If you have an item that you wish discussed please speak to Rev Ben Haslam or myself.

**Alison Howell**

### **Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk**

This the theme of the World Day of Prayer Service at 10.30am on Friday 6th March 2020 at Belmont Chapel. It has been prepared by the women of Zimbabwe – and I hope all our lovely Zimbabweans in our congregation will make a special effort to attend this special Service this year! The Bible reading within the Service is from John 5:2-9a and the focus is on Peace, Reconciliation and Love – what more could we want?

**Margretta Bowstead**

# Prayer Focus for February

## Pray without ceasing

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

We have now left the EU but that is only the beginning. Pray for our Politicians as they negotiate new trade deals. May they always be fair to all. We are also facing an unsteady time due to so much unrest in Iraq & Iran. This could impact on the lives of those imprisoned unjustly in Iran. Pray for their safety & for their families.

In other parts of the world we see natural disasters. Australia has suffered catastrophic fires, whilst Indonesia suffers terrible floods. Pray for all who are affected by these terrible events.

At the end of February we enter the period of Lent. This is a time when we take a step back & examine our walk with the Lord. Take time to prepare ourselves for Easter & all that means to us.

Remember to pray for our Church family. Pray particularly for those who are facing this year without a loved one. Try to pray for all our church family throughout the month. We don't always know what challenges they face in their lives.



***If you have anything that you would like included please let Julie Rothwell know so that it can include it here.***

### **Our Prayer Phone 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 (01392 437329) or 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**

# Dates For Your Diary

## February 2020

Sun 2nd	10.00 a.m.	Mary Hext - All Age Worship
	6.30 p.m.	Paul Violet
Fri 7th	7.30 p.m.	'Sleeping Beauty' Pantomime at The Mint MC
Sat 8th	11.00 a.m.	Interfaith Week Peace Prayers - URC, Dix's Field **
	7.30 p.m.	'Sleeping Beauty' Pantomime at The Mint MC
Sun 9th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Alan Rothwell - Themed Preaching and Sacrament **
	6.30 p.m.	Rev Ben Haslam - Sacrament and Prayer & Praise
Wed 12th	7.30 p.m.	Home Group Meets at 18 Tuckfield Close **
Sun 16th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Ben Haslam - Themed Preaching & Baptism **
	<b>4.00 p.m.</b>	<b>Messy Church</b>
Tue 18th	10.00 a.m.	Roundabout Café (until 12pm)
Thu 20th	2.00 p.m.	Minister's Bible Study in the lounge **
	7.30 p.m.	Wonford Worms Book Club meet in the lounge
Sat 22nd	10.00 a.m.	The Big Green Event at Exeter Cathedral ** (Until 4.30 p.m.)
Sun 23rd	10.00 a.m.	Dr Joan Wragg - Themed Preaching **
	6.30 p.m.	Rev Ann Varker
<b>24th February to 8th March 2020 - Fairtrade Fortnight</b>		
Tue 25th	7.30 p.m.	Church Council meets **
Wed 26th	7.30 p.m.	Home Group meets at 39 Meyer Court **

**\*\* 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

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

## Tuesday

9.15 a.m. Weekly Prayers in the Quiet Room  
10.00 a.m. The Roundabout Café (3rd Tuesday each month)

## Wednesday

7.30 p.m. Home Group Bible Study (fortnightly)

## Thursday

2.00 p.m. Minister's 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 2020 Newsletter will be Sunday 16th February 2020. 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](mailto:andrew.m.jackson@me.com)