

Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

January 2025
(No: 536)



Minister: Rev Ben Haslam (01392 256716)



Wonford is a
Fairtrade church

The **Methodist** Church 

www.wonfordmethodistchurch.org.uk



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A Message From The Minister

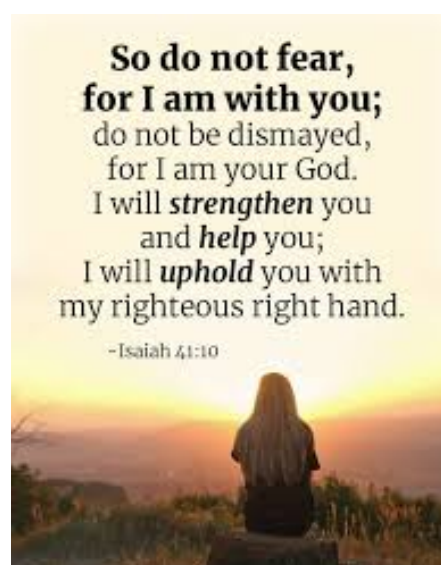
Dear Friends,

As I write this, I am conscious that there are any number of gloomy things I could mention. The news gives us plenty to be apprehensive about. There might be things in your life which mean you're entering the new year with trepidation, wondering what dubious joys the next twelve months will bring. However, I'm going to take all that as a given and instead focus on the one thing we can be certain of: that God has gone before us and holds the future in His hands. The words 'do not fear' appear again and again in the Bible (some say those words are mentioned 365 times in total, a promise for every day of the year! I've never counted but it could well be true!) God frequently, it seems, addresses those words to people who have plenty to fear. So what's the secret? How do we take seriously the instruction, 'do not fear?'.

I don't think there's a simple, trick to living without fear. Fear, scripture says, is driven out by love – love of God. So, we are invited to live in such a way that our love and trust in God are growing and deepening as time passes. Prayer and devotion are central to this, the main thing being that our lives should be rooted in the one thing which time and chance can't take away from us – our loving and gracious God. Anything else, as the old hymn says, is 'sinking sand'. I think of Mary (sister of Martha), sitting at Jesus' feet, listening, learning and adoring – attending to the 'one thing needful' and I find myself better able to look towards the coming year with fresh hope, whatever it might bring.

Happy New Year!

With every blessing
Ben Haslam



Dates For January 2025

Coffee

5th	Margaret & Terry
12th	Alison & Jenny S
19th	Rose & Paul
26th	Lisa & Shamini

Bible Study Group

Our fortnightly Friday Bible Study Group meets in our Lounge at 3pm to 4.30pm. In January they meet on the 3rd, 17th and 31st. We extend a warm welcome to anyone who would like to join us as we explore the Bible together and share fellowship. Please speak to Monika Noronha or Terry Spencer if you want further details.

Monika

The Away Group

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

Roundabout Café

The Roundabout Café will meet on Tuesday 21st January 2025.

This month we welcome Pete Kiff and he will be talking about 'A Missionary's Child in India'.

We meet from 10.00am until noon with coffee and cake. Please join us if you can.



Monthly Prayer Meeting

This will take place each month between 9 and 10am on the same morning as Roundabout Café. For January this will be the 21st.

Lisa Thomas



Wonford Welcome Drop-In for Everyone - Saturdays 10.30am to 12.00pm.

We will also serve a light lunch and pud (for a cost of £1) between 12.00 and 12.30pm.

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

4th January - we will have a few activities to share our good memories of times past.

11th January - in Energy Saving Week we will have our Recycling Bingo with prizes

18th January - we'll be celebrating Winnie the Pooh (on A.A.Milne's birthday) by sharing honey treats, Pooh quotes, games and stories

25th January - join us in a quiz about the Chinese New Year and share fortune cookies

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.

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

New Year Social

The will be a New Year Bring & Share Social on Friday 17th January 2025. Exact timings will be given out nearer the date but are expected to be 6.30 for 7.00pm.

This will be a games evening. More details later.

Themed Preaching for Spring 2025

We will be starting a new series entitled '**The Master's Men**' (*and Women - see Luke 8: 1-3*). The first two weeks are shown below. More details about future weeks will be in the February newsletter.

Jan 19	Judas Iscariot (The Traitor) <i>(John 13: 18 - 30)</i>	Rev Terry Spencer
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Jan 26	Philip (The First Disciple) <i>(John 1: 43-46 & 6: 1 - 15)</i>	Andy Mulcock
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Spell It Out!!

Some people do lovely, generous things quietly, like the widow Jesus happened to spot, undemonstratively making her financial offering to God. (Mark ch12 v 41) Or like the prisoner in Walton Jail Liverpool, with very few possessions, who graciously gave me his very last throat lozenge because I had a bad cough.

But some stories need shouting out, like the surgeon in tears in a Gaza hospital, angrily telling a TV reporter about two children, who died in his care, because shells hitting his hospital had destroyed all electrical power, and he couldn't operate to save them. Similarly a young Palestinian boy, with arms widely outstretched, screamed into the reporter's microphone, "Why don't people in the West help us end this war?"

Dame Deborah James, a reporter struck down in her 40's with incurable bowel cancer, was determined to share her story on TV, and all types of social media to help save others' lives. In recent days, Sir Chris Hoy with a similar terminal illness, has keenly picked up the baton from Deborah to broadcast his story widely, encouraging more people to get a check for cancer: "There's hope out there!" Both have been so outspoken about their illness, which has helped so many to focus on things that really matter.

Our New Year Resolution should be to challenge ourselves about our own Christian faith – not just turning up for Sunday worship, but also with an eagerness to learn more about Jesus Christ and the part we can play in His mission. If reading the Bible is not very exciting for you, try watching Sir Laurence Olivier on You Tube reading Psalm 150! It will inspire you. Let us all be prepared to speak with enthusiasm about our faith more often with others. Our love for Jesus is meant to be shared. Tell it out! It's life-changing!

For the record, who first told you about Jesus? And an even bigger question: Who recently have you told about Jesus? Your faith is worth sharing! Have a happy, fulfilling New Year.

*"Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
To children's children and for evermore!"*

Rev Malcolm Carter

Did you know that you can follow Wonford Methodist Church on WhatsApp?



Scan this QR code
on your phone's
camera

Make sure that
your notifications
for this channel
are unmuted!

You'll be kept informed of all the Church
activities

A Christmas Message from the President and Vice-President for 2024

Imagine this—it's 1750. Revd David Taylor and a companion are travelling through the hills of the Peak District in a blinding snowstorm, tired and almost freezing. Finally, they reach a solitary house. They knock on the door, walk in, and shake the snow off their clothes.

Can you picture the owner of the house, John Hadfield, feeling wary, reaching for his sword - thinking the strangers had bad intentions? But then, David Taylor approached him and said, "Peace be to this house."

Revd David Taylor was one of Methodism's early itinerant preachers, beginning in 1739. He notably converted John Bennet, and they travelled together for some time. David Taylor had some chaotic experiences: he was with Charles Wesley during the riots at Sheffield and Thorpe in May 1743. He defended John Wesley and Bennet against the mob at Bolton in 1749 and embraced the peace and quiet whenever he could.

After their chance encounter, Methodist services started in John Hadfield's house, and a Society was formed, with John becoming the first member. By 1817, Edale Methodist Chapel was built and open to the community.

Much of life can feel like we are living in that speeded-up film where everything is clamouring for our attention. The news from round the world disturbs us, the voices on social media pull us in different directions, issues within our communities trouble us, family and health problems are in our minds, each day there seems to be something new to make thoughts buzz round in our minds.

We are now in advent and a time of preparation for Christmas and the voices and noises in our hearts and heads can feel amplified, but we have the chance to pause in our thoughts, look around us, hush the noise and listen for the song of the angels.

Hushing the overwhelming "noise" of all the pressures around us so that we can be still and hear the voices of messengers telling us of good news of joy and love and hope is so important.

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the son of God, God coming close to us, and our lives. This is good news for all of us. God is born among us, in us, in our world.

It means that the love of God comes close to us, to those we love and to those who we struggle to love and care for. God does not discriminate.

This Christmas we invite you to rejoice in the good news of the birth of Jesus Christ, whose coming among us as a vulnerable baby, born in a land of occupation to a young girl, who became a refugee from violence, and who grew to show the love of God in his life and death to all he met.

This Christmas may you hear the message of the angels, be still in the presence of God born here among us and know God's never-ending love, God's hope for the world and the deep, deep joy of knowing you are seen, known and loved tenderly by God, now and forever as God's beloved child.

A prayer of blessing.

The angels are still singing.

Prophets are still speaking.

Hush the noise, hear them sing, repeat the song, seek justice.

And the blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be yours/ours, now and always. Amen

Finding peace during busy periods can be challenging. Sometimes we want peace. Sometimes we need peace.

Edale and its small Methodist Chapel have a long history of being a place of rest for horseback journeys between Manchester and Sheffield, before becoming a sought after destination for hill walkers.

Set back from the road, behind a stone wall and black metal gates, Edale Methodist Chapel stands. Ready to provide a quiet shelter for everyone who needs it. This Christmas, how can you make space to escape the busy noisiness and find peace? How will you let God speak to you in times of quiet amongst the joyous celebrations?

We hope you can hush the noise and hear the angels sing.

A happy Christmas from us to you – God bless.

The Revd Helen Cameron and Mrs Carolyn Godfrey

Prayer Focus for January 2025

Week Commencing Sunday 5th January

This week, let's remind ourselves of the words of the Methodist Covenant Prayer which we will share [in this or another form] next Sunday. Ask yourself, 'How can I prepare my heart to say and live out these words this year?'

I am no longer my own but yours.
Put me to what you will,
rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing,
put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you,
or laid aside for you,
exalted for you,
or brought low for you;
let me be full,
let me be empty,
let me have all things,
let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours. So be it.
And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven.'

The Methodist Covenant Prayer

Week Commencing Sunday 12th January

“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have summoned you by name; you are mine.
Isaiah 43:1b

We pray for people who live with fear and anxiety, depression or stress.
May they be met with compassion and understanding, love and hope.

Week Commencing Sunday 19th January

My prayer is not for them alone.
I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,
that all of them may be one,
Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.
May they also be in us so that the world
may believe that you have sent me.

John 17:20-21

Week of prayer for Christian Unity. Pray for Christians Together Across Exeter [CTAX] and One for Exeter, who seek to encourage churches to work together to bring real unity across our city.

Week Commencing Sunday 26th January. Homeless Sunday

“This is what the Lord Almighty said: ‘Administer true justice;
show mercy and compassion to one another.
Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor.’”
Zechariah 7:9-10

Pray for the homeless in our city and in our nation and for the organisations which support them. Ask God to show you how you can be a blessing to someone who is homeless.

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

Dates For Your Diary

January 2025

Fri 3rd	3.00 p.m.	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.	Rev Malcolm Carter
Sat 11th	10.30 a.m.	Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 12th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Ben Haslam Covenant Service & Sacrament
Fri 17th	3.00 p.m. 6.30 p.m.	Bible Study Group meet in the lounge ** New Year 'Bring & Share' Games Evening ** <i>(Times to be confirmed)</i>
Sat 18th	10.30 a.m.	Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 19th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Terry Spencer - Themed Preaching **
Tue 21st	9.00 a.m. 10.00 a.m.	Monthly Prayer Meeting (until 10am) ** Roundabout Café (until 12pm) **
Sat 25th	10.30 a.m.	Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 26th	10.00 a.m.	Andy Mulcock - Themed Preaching **
Fri 31st	3.00 p.m.	Bible Study Group meet in the lounge **

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



The deadline for items for the February 2025 Newsletter will be Sunday 12th January 2025. 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 in the lounge *(Fortnightly)*

Tuesday

9.00 a.m. Monthly Prayer Meeting *(3rd Tuesday)*

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

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 12.00 p.m.

Wonford Welcome Drop-In

Tea, coffee and biscuits are free.

*We will also serve a light lunch and pud (for a cost of £1)
between 12.00 and 12.30pm.*

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