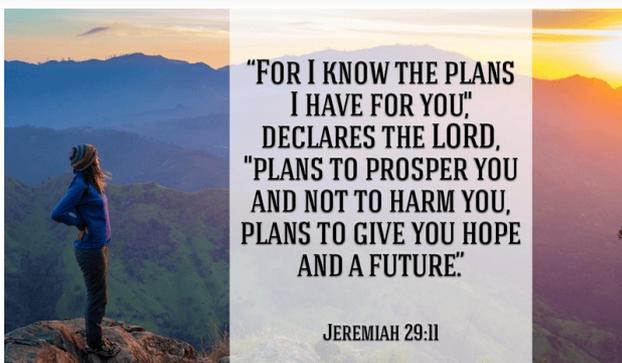


Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

June 2020
(No: 489)
Special Edition



Minister: Rev Ben Haslam (01392 256716)



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A Message From The Minister

Dear Friends,

Revelation 3. 1-6

Around 600 years before this letter was written, the inhabitants of Sardis came in for a terrible shock. Having believed their city to be impregnable, sitting as it did on top of a steep hill, they were proved wrong when Cyrus the Persian stormed this supposedly impregnable bastion and conquered it. Quite apart from the physical devastation the invading Persians will inevitably have wrought, the psychological impact must have been crushing. Nevertheless, 600 years is a long time, and the old complacency returned. This attitude seems to have been mirrored in the Church which met in Sardis. Jesus, following His usual practice of identifying qualities to praise before giving a church His criticism, here acknowledges that there are praiseworthy, if unspecified deeds to be commended in the Sardis church. They seem however, to be of a piecemeal and half-hearted nature. This church, it seems, won't go the whole hog with its discipleship. They may have succeeded in doing enough to make themselves look good in the eyes of the wider world, but their heart is not in it, and God is not fooled. Reputation is not everything – especially as that which God values so often differs from what is prized by the world. Christ calls the church at Sardis to take this important lesson to heart before it's too late.

Sardis' city council once approached the Roman Emperor Tiberias for permission to build a Temple in Tiberias' honour. The grounds for asking were the glories of their past rather than anything notable about their current situation. Jesus detects something of this same attitude in the church at Sardis – a looking to past greatness to compensate for a lack of spiritual vitality in the present. Jesus' compassionate, yet unsparing eye uncovers a disturbing complacency, a 'going through the motions' attitude. These Christians assume that what they have been in the past is enough to sustain them in the present. Not so says Jesus. Living as a Christian is more of an ongoing process, being changed 'from one degree of glory to another', and not setting limits on how much we are prepared to learn and grow. We, just as much as the Christians at Sardis, are called to surrender ourselves to the limitless horizons of God's purposes and never, ever, to think that God has finished with us, or His Church. When people, or churches, are complacent, they erect a wall around themselves and block the possibility of any further growth. The church at Sardis stands as both a warning against assuming past glories will provide atone for any apathy in

the present, and an encouragement to keep reminding ourselves that with God, there is always more. More to learn, more love to receive, more ways to let the Holy Spirit flow through our lives. Sardis, in their complacency, settled for less. We are called to be always striving for more.

With every blessing
Ben Haslam

Can You Grow a Loofah?

Being very happy in my garden I always encourage plants to grow from cuttings and enjoy coming across new varieties. I was intrigued to see on the evening news that loofahs were being grown at a local National Trust garden, so I found a supplier and bought a packet. As they are very big plants, I planted 6 seeds and gave the rest to other enthusiasts. This included at Wonford Methodist when I attended a church meeting earlier in the year. I knew Wonford folk to be very keen to work for the environment and might like the challenge.

I soaked and planted my seeds and put them in the kitchen airing cupboard and waited - and waited - and was about to give up hope when this one plant struggled to emerge. It stayed that size for ages and I thought that was as far as it would get in our cool climate. It made me laugh and thought you might like to see my pathetic result, so sent the photo to Margretta. I really don't think there will be a lot of bath loofahs to sell at the Mint Christmas sale this year!

However, it has grown about an inch in the last couple of weeks - maybe?

Barbara Pillidge



The Earth is the Lord's – Methodist Prayer Handbook 2020-21

As far as I know this annual booklet will be published as usual; and the title really pleases me, as one of our Church Green Team members. It contains a wide range of information over a double page for each day of the month, about the Methodist Church in this country and worldwide, as well as lovely photos and varied and helpful prayers.

It runs from September 2020 to August 2021, and will cost about £4 whether ordinary or large print. Just tell me what you'd like. I need to know before 12th July, when my order goes in; and I get delivery mid-August, when I'll hope to hand them out and collect the money! This time might be a bit different; and, perhaps, you could phone (01392 437329) or email (mrw7bowstead@yahoo.co.uk) to tell me your order? I recommend it wholeheartedly, as it has many uses; and this is the time to tell me if you'd like a copy order one now!

Margretta Bowstead

Who Likes Earwigs?

I have never been fond of them since finding one in my sock as a child. Something was pinching my toe and on taking my sock off, I found it. Yuck. However, I have just read Dave Coulson book entitled 'The Garden Jungle or Gardening to Save the Planet'. A very interesting read written in a very easy to read style and quite funny in places. He has one whole chapter on earwigs explaining their uses in the garden. If any of you are lucky enough to have a garden with fruit trees you will want to encourage earwigs! Yes they may nibble at your strawberries or the occasional apple but the latest evidence suggests that earwigs are overwhelmingly beneficial, acting as a major control agent. Earwigs are omnivores, eating aphids, codling moths, leaf rollers, scale insects and psyllids. Plus many other insects. Earwigs have one generation a year producing fifty or so offspring. Aphids breed spectacularly fast giving birth to young who already have developing offspring inside them.

The female earwig lays creamy oval eggs in a burrow in the autumn. She cares for them guarding them against predators. She will gently pick them up and turn them, nibbling them to remove any dirt or fungus. They hatch as nymphs – small grey coloured versions of herself and she will shepherd them together like a mother duck. Only when they moult will she evict them from their home.

Nature is such a balance, if left to itself it invariably sorts problems out itself. Many insecticides kill earwigs, lacewings, beetles and hoverflies. The very

insects that would predate the aphids that farmers/gardeners are trying to eradicate.

Alison Howell

Wonford Green Team



5 JUNE

EVERY YEAR, EVERYWHERE, EVERYONE.

Christian Aid and Count Your Blessings

Thinking back to Lent this year quite a few of our congregation took the Count Your Blessings booklet and undertook to follow that discipline throughout Lent. However we have only heard of three responses with money submitted to Christian Aid (CA). Maybe some of you didn't take up the challenge or have forgotten to send in your cash. If that's you then could you send your cheque direct to Christian Aid (but also notify David Westcott and myself) or send a cheque to David made out to Wonford Methodist Church. David will send on to CA. The point is that it will be very good to know how much we have collectively as a church raised for Christian Aid during this Lent campaign.

I understand that CA is particularly short of funds to support overseas projects at present and this year will also be unable to mount the usual "red envelopes" fund raising campaign. So do help if you can. PLEASE.

Of course the church doesn't currently have a Christian Aid rep so if you would like to take on this role do make that known.

Thank you and God bless

Tony



A Light in this World

Prayer Focus for June

Prayer - Our Strongest Weapon - Pray Without Ceasing

This month may I encourage you all to continue to pray as before around the Coronavirus pandemic. Give thanks for all who have survived including our Prime Minister, Boris Johnson.

As you pray along the lines of last month may I also encourage you to pray for those who are at the end of life but not with the virus. We have all been prevented from visiting our loved ones in hospitals, care homes or indeed in their own home if it's away from us. It has been brought home to me personally how devastating it is for a loved one to pass away without the opportunity to visit them. Also remember those who lost a loved one suddenly e.g. in an accident.

Don't forget the areas of the world that are or have been at war. So many refugees living in ghettos where if the virus were to hit the area could be wiped out.

Pray for the persecuted church, political prisoners where ever they are. Keep safe everyone & remember you are not alone. Our Heavenly Father is with you all the way.

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

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)

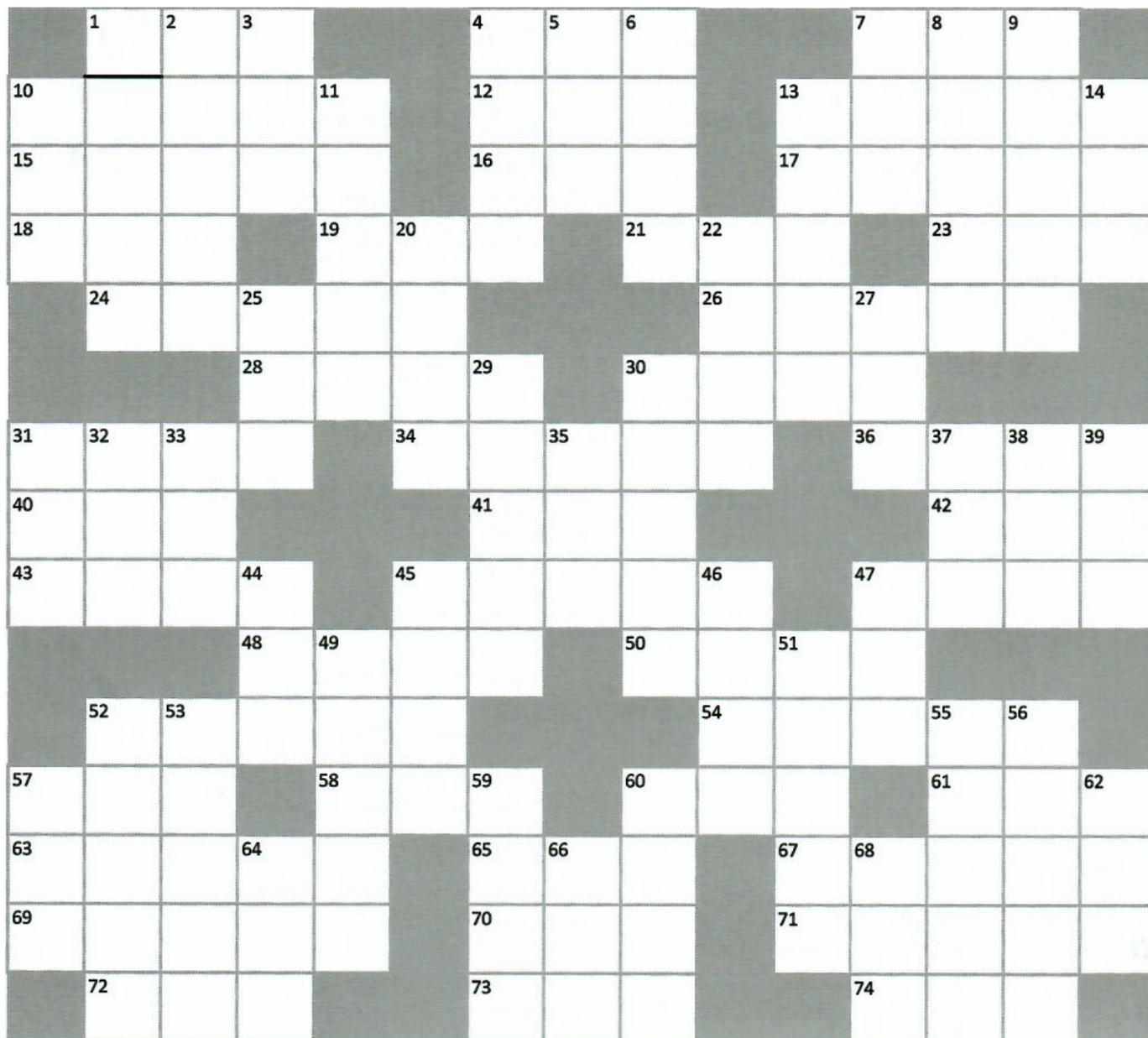
Various prayers and services from the Methodist Church are available to listen to via free-phone telephone numbers:

To listen to a short prayer – 0808 281 2514

To listen to a selection of Methodist related news stories: 0808 281 2478
(Content for both is updated weekly on a Thursday afternoon)

The Prayer Team

Bible Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Those who make the food laws (US abbr)
- 4 Fire remains
- 7 Morse code dash
- 10 British princess
- 12 Central Intelligence Agency
- 13 Wharfs
- 15 Plague of Egypt

- 16 Explosive
- 17 What is agreed on
- 18 Entire
- 19 Spots
- 21 Samuel's mentor
- 23 Single
- 24 Sacrificial table
- 26 Golf tournaments
- 28 Get out!

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 30 ____ Major (Big Dipper) | 57 Spider's net |
| 31 Applaud | 58 Annex |
| 34 For God so loved the ____ | 60 Expression of surprise |
| 36 Biblical word for 'you idiot!' | 61 Men's neckwear |
| 40 Chum | 63 Projection |
| 41 Football conference | 65 Old Testament city |
| 42 Mutt | 67 Office furniture |
| 43 Word meaning father | 69 What Israelites ate in desert |
| 45 Fisherman disciple | 70 Least amount |
| 47 Blessed are the ____ | 71 Parable of the ____ and goats |
| 48 Danish physicist | 72 Caustic substance |
| 50 Carpets | 73 Pastry |
| 52 Italian physicist | 74 Air blower |
| 54 Sum | |

DOWN

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 Slang term for man | 35 Rodent |
| 2 Power tool | 37 Whiz |
| 3 Grow older | 38 Remind |
| 4 Book after Gospels | 39 Noah's ____ |
| 5 Transgression | 44 Abridged (abbr) |
| 6 Opposite of love | 45 Mr Donahue |
| 7 Payable | 46 Great-grandmother of David |
| 8 Brother of Moses | 47 Western time zone (US) |
| 9 Religious songs | 49 Last letter of Greek alphabet |
| 10 Farming club (US abbr) | 51 Instruments to guide oxen |
| 11 Son of Abraham | 52 Wild |
| 13 Brand of cotton tipped sticks | 53 Black |
| 14 South south east | 55 Afloat (2 words) |
| 20 Sketch | 56 Consider equal |
| 22 The ____ is my shepherd | 57 Words per minute |
| 25 Cooking measurement | 59 Thy word is a ____ unto my feet |
| 27 Hearing part | 60 Green Gables dweller |
| 29 ____ of Babel | 62 Extra-sensory perception |
| 30 Stomach sore | 64 North north east |
| 31 Accountant (US) | 66 Roman three |
| 32 Scientist's office | 68 Extremely high frequency (abbr) |
| 33 Loose gown worn at mass | |

The deadline for items for the July 2020 Newsletter will be Sunday 14th June 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