

Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

May 2020
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Special Edition



Minister: Rev Ben Haslam (01392 256716)



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

www.wonfordmethodistchurch.org.uk

 @WonfordMethodistChurch



A Message From The Minister

Dear Friends,

Revelation 2. 18-29

T.S.Eliot wrote of how, throughout our lives, we proceed from 'wrong to wrong' without seeming to be able to do anything about it, unless 'restored by that refining fire', by which he meant the Holy Spirit. The Spirit, says Eliot, has the power to work in our lives as a purifying fire, burning away impurities, and leaving behind something purer, the essential 'us' that God always wanted us to be. I wonder if that idea might help us to understand why Jesus introduces Himself to the church in Thyatira as one whose 'eyes are like flaming fire'. The Thyatirans need to know that Jesus brings uncomfortable, but ultimately liberating and cleansing power into their lives. His eyes, as they flame like fire, search hearts and minds, and nothing can escape His gaze.

Christian faith, holding on to Jesus, will take us far nearer to the heart of life than anything else can possibly do. It is so vital not to settle for a diluted, compromised belief, not because Jesus is some stern, disapproving policeman figure, but because we can so easily think we're following Jesus whilst pursuing a path that ultimately leads us away from Him. God will never cease to desire our full and uninhibited flourishing and stand resolutely opposed to anything which prevents it. Hence Christ's harsh words about this 'Jezebel' figure, whose siren song has encouraged some of the Thyatiran Christians to mix pagan practices with their Christian devotion. Using the name Jezebel of course, is a reminder of the wife of King Ahab who we can read about in 1 Kings 16-22. Jezebel, an avowed enemy of God's people, came to a very sticky end and her name would become a byword for temptation and treachery. Whatever seductive promises might have been made to the Thyatirans, they will lead, in the end, to a dark and bleak place. The road to true life might seem narrower, but it leads to a future more glorious than anything we can presently imagine. For those who seek this better future and spurn Jezebel's promises (let Jezebel for us stand for any belief, lifestyle, habit, whatever, that would weaken or blur our relationship with Christ), Jesus offers the 'morning star'. In Revelation 22.16, the morning star represents Jesus Himself, so He is offering nothing less than to share His very self with His people – with us. Just think of that.

With every blessing
Ben Haslam

“South West Awake!”

For 30 minutes, 2pm – 2.30pm, on Saturday 30 May 2020 all around the 630 miles of the South West Coastal Path, folk from churches will stand and pray and praise. The website is www.southwestawake.com for more information. *Please keep checking this website since the event may be cancelled.*



Second Childhood?

We are being told to “stay at home”, and only go out “for a little exercise” once a day. So, I’ve decided to explore my neighbourhood by walking its many streets – some I know very well, but others I’ve never been along. And I decided to mark up a street map to see how well I was covering the area. I think the way my life has changed in the wake of Covid-19 is a good illustration of my title here!

The last 2 or 3 weeks of March had some gloriously sunny days, and all nature was at its best. I enjoyed the colourful gardens, the superb blossom in the trees above me and I heard many bird songs – all were a real blessing. And then I began to notice pictures of Rainbows in front windows. I think I heard that children, no longer at school, had been invited to draw them to show any passer-by their skill. So then I began to count how many Rainbows I saw each day on my walk! I noticed 5, then 7, then 8; but imagine my amazement when near Ladysmith schools I counted a total of 36 Rainbows!! And one of them was actually not a painting – but made of Lego bricks in the kitchen window of the house I called home for 15 years, until I moved to my flat in 2009!! Still it continues through sunny April. But when one day I totalled over 200 in one walk along Sweetbriar Lane and past St Michael’s School with rainbows all along their front, I decided to stop.

Margretta Bowstead

Taken from 3 April Edition of the Methodist Recorder

Social Distance like a Wesley

*Avoid all the people you can,
by all the means you can,
in all the ways you can,
in all the places you can,
at all the times you can,
as long as ever you can.*

Prayer Focus for May

Prayer - Our Strongest Weapon - Pray Without Ceasing

Since our last edition when I encouraged us to pray about the COVID 19 pandemic, life has changed for us all. For some it has been a time to remain at home, relying on others to shop for them for their basic needs. For them it is very likely that the only face they see is the one looking out of their television screen or the only voice, that coming from their radio. For others it has become a chance to help those in isolation by shopping or picking up medication. It's a time when many have telephoned others just to check they were ok & see if they needed anything or even just for a chat. For others it has meant risking their own lives to care for others. Teachers caring for children while their parents are out working - keyworkers, postmen/women, train & bus drivers, refuse collectors, shop workers, farmers, care workers, cleaners, caterers, receptionist, nurses & doctors, so many more. One thing we can ALL do is pray. Pray for those in the frontline in our hospitals & care homes. Pray for those who spend many hours alone. Pray for our government as they lead us through this time of crisis. As I write this our Prime Minister is in intensive care with COVID 19. Pray for the future of our Country as we come through this & rebuild again. Pray for those in our church family who are ill at this time. You don't need to know names or situations. Our Lord already knows but we can still lift them to Him. Pray for those in our church who are frontline workers, especially those working in the intensive care units. We seem here to be asking a lot from God but don't forget to give thanks for all those who have helped us. Thank him for radios, televisions, phone calls, for those that have it - technology, for all the keyworkers, for all who obey the rules to stay home except to shop for essentials, 30 minutes exercise, or work. When this is over we look forward to being together once again to worship together & socialise once more.

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)

The Prayer Team



5 JUNE

EVERY YEAR, EVERYWHERE, EVERYONE.

The theme for this year's World Environment Day is 'celebrating biodiversity'. This day has been celebrated internationally since 1974 and its purpose is to help us focus on action we can take to combat the world's environmental problems.

Biodiversity is defined as the variety and variability of life on Earth. There are estimated to be 8.7 million species on Earth with approximately 1.3 million identified so far. We are blessed with an abundance of life on this planet but these organisms are at huge risk. We are on the verge of the next big mass extinction. Within the next ten years it is estimated that 1 million species will become extinct. Wildlife has reduced by over 60% during the last fifty years. Humans and livestock animals now account for 96% of mammal biomass on this planet. 70% of all birds are farmed poultry. Nature has been pushed to the brink. Complex systems have developed over millions of years and these are in jeopardy. Our fate is intricately linked with other life. As stewards of this world, the fate of wildlife is in our hands.

What can we do to help protect biodiversity? We could purchase household products that are eco-friendly. Recycling lowers the use of petroleum needed in manufacture and reduces the impact on forest ecosystems from making paper products. However recycling still requires energy and therefore reducing waste and reusing items is paramount. Purchasing eco-friendly appliances and using energy saving light bulbs will reduce emissions. Switching to a green energy supplier would help us move towards more sustainable energy sources. Planting more bee friendly flowers and using natural pest control protects our precious pollinators. We

might consider walking more and driving less to reduce pollution. We are all becoming more environmentally conscious and are looking at ways we can do more. It is important to share our ideas and explore ways that we can be more environmentally friendly. The good news is that there are so many things that we can do. If we all do our bit, we can make a difference.

During the lead up to this year's World Environment Day, The United Nations Environment Programme invites the global community to show their commitment to protecting nature and to the sustainable use of nature's resources. To receive the latest stories, news and tips you can sign up for email updates on the World Environment Day website.

My love for nature began in my childhood. Long Dartmoor walks and evenings watching nature documentaries led me to a deep appreciation of nature and so I will leave you with the words of Sir David Attenborough, a man who inspires me.

"Nature once determined how we survive, now we determine how nature survives."

Alison Hobbs - Church Green Team

How many Christians does it take to change a light bulb?

Charismatics:	Only one. Hands already in the air.
Pentecostals:	Ten. One to change the bulb, and nine to pray against the spirit of darkness.
Presbyterians:	None. Lights will go on and off at predestined times.
Roman Catholics:	None. Candles only.
Baptists:	At least fifteen. One to change the bulb, and three committees to approve the change and decide who brings the potato salad and fried chicken.
Episcopalians:	Three. One to call the electrician, one to mix the drinks, and one to talk about how much better the old one was.
Methodists:	Undetermined. Whether your light is bright, dull, or completely out, you are loved. You can be a light bulb, turnip bulb, or tulip bulb. Church-wide lighting service is planned for Sunday. Bring bulb of your choice and a covered dish.
Mormons:	Six. Five wives to replace the bulb while husband reviews church lighting policy.
Lutherans:	None. Lutherans don't believe in change.
Amish:	What's a light bulb?

LAWS

- 1 Law of Mechanical Repair - After your hands become coated with grease, your nose will begin to itch and you'll have to visit the loo.
- 2 Law of Gravity - Any tool, nut, bolt, screw, when dropped, will roll to the least accessible corner.
- 3 Law of Probability - The probability of being watched is directly proportional to the stupidity of your act.
- 4 Law of Random Numbers - If you dial a wrong number, you never get a busy signal and someone always answers.
- 5 Law of the Alibi - If you tell the boss you were late for work because you had a flat tyre, the very next morning you will have a flat tyre.
- 6 Variation Law - If you change queues or traffic lanes, the one you were in will always move faster than the one you are in now (works every time).
- 7 Law of the Bath - When the body is fully immersed in water, the telephone rings.
- 8 Law of Close Encounters - The probability of meeting someone you know increases dramatically when you are with someone you don't want to be seen with.
- 9 Law of the Result - When you try to prove to someone that a machine won't work, it will.
- 10 Law of Biomechanics - The severity of the itch is inversely proportional to the reach.
- 11 Law of the Theatre and Sports Arena - At any event, the people whose seats are furthest from the aisle always arrive last. They are the ones who will leave their seats several times to go for food, beer, or the toilet and who leave early before the end of the performance or the game is over. The folks in the aisle seats come early, never move once, have long gangly legs or big bellies, and stay to the bitter end of the performance. The aisle people also are very surly folk.

- 12 The Coffee Law - As soon as you sit down to a cup of hot coffee, your boss will ask you to do something which will last until the coffee is cold.
- 13 Murphy's Law of Lockers - If there are only two people in a locker room, they will have adjacent lockers.
- 14 Law of Physical Surfaces - The chances of an open-faced jam sandwich landing face down on a floor are directly correlated to the newness and cost of the carpet or rug.
- 15 Law of Logical Argument - Anything is possible if you don't know what you are talking about.
- 16 Brown's Law of Physical Appearance - If the clothes fit, they're ugly.
- 17 Wilson's Law of Commercial Marketing Strategy - As soon as you find a product that you really like, they will stop making it.
- 18 Doctors' Law - If you don't feel well, make an appointment to go to the doctor, by the time you get there you'll feel better. But don't make an appointment, and you'll stay sick.

The Greatest Man in history is Jesus.

He had no servants, yet they called Him Master.

He had no degree, yet they called Him Teacher.

He had no medicines, yet they called Him Healer.

He had no army, yet kings feared Him.

He won no military battles, yet He conquered the world.

He committed no crime, yet they crucified Him.

He was buried in a tomb, yet He lives today.

The deadline for items for the June 2020 Newsletter will be Sunday 17th May 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