

Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

May 2021
(No: 499)



GOD'S LOVE IS
UNCONDITIONAL
UNENDING &
UNMISTAKABLE.
WE ARE
BELOVED.

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,

“Christ has no hands but ours”. I know these are well meaning words, but really.... In the eighteenth century, a school of thought known as Deism held that God created the world and then left it to it's own devices, refusing to interfere any further. If we say, ‘Christ has no hands but ours’, we’re being modern day Deists, giving up on God and relying on our own efforts. This doesn’t get us very far and won’t do. In fact, one very key reason for the decline of the Church in our part of the world is that we have jettisoned the supernatural, Spirit-led Christianity of the New Testament in favour of a managerial, human centred faith in which God is asked to bless whatever we decide to do.

I used the word ‘supernatural’ just then, and some of you will have frowned or looked puzzled. Surely talk of the supernatural belongs to the lunatic fringe of the Church? Well, I’m simply using the word to mean that which is beyond our everyday experience, that which comes from outside our everyday world of things and places that we can see. In the New Testament Church, people expected God to be tangibly and dramatically present in their midst. In growing churches, even today, there is an emphasis on encountering the living God in worship, a sense of being open to the Divine in our midst.

Too often, the contemporary Church has been obsessed with being relevant. If only we can show that we’re relevant to people’s actual lives, goes the mantra, our churches will grow. No. Our churches will grow if they help people to encounter God, in all His irresistible power and love, and be transformed by that encounter. The world doesn’t need our relevance. The world needs us to be a gateway to God. Let’s pray for that. Let’s desire that above all else. Christ has hands – and arms. Let’s pray for the world, as well as us, to be swept up in them.

With every blessing
Ben Haslam

Notes for Attending Sunday Worship - Reminder

- You must wear a face covering
- Please wait to be invited in by one of our stewards
- Please use hand sanitiser as you enter and leave
- Please sit in the seat allocated by the steward and social distancing must be respected
- The toilets are available and are monitored
- Please give your contact details to the Steward; they will be recorded for Track and Trace purposes only
- You should not enter if you have symptoms of COVID-19
- If you subsequently test positive for Coronavirus please inform the church
Rev Ben Haslam 01392 256716

If you have any questions please speak to one of the stewards.

Offerings & Income Tax

Over the past year or so the income of many churches has been severely reduced; however at Wonford our income has held up very well due to the amazing generosity of our fellowship.

One of the ways to increase our income is for us to claim **Gift Aid** (from HMRC – the tax people) on the donations we receive. We get an extra 25p for every £1 you give; it does not cost you anything and we make the claim.

If you pay income tax (and have registered with our Gift Aid Secretary – Paul Violet) we can claim Gift Aid on any money you give.

- Cheque or cash in one of our numbered envelopes.
- Direct giving by bank transfer or standing order.

If you DO NOT pay income tax the only way we can claim Gift Aid is for you to contribute by putting cash into the church offering – but it can't be £50 notes or cheques.

You can do this weekly, monthly or whenever you like and you do not need to include your name.

We cannot claim Gift Aid from contributions made directly into the church bank account by standing order or bank transfer.

I know this is more difficult these days when cash is used less and less but it would be of great financial benefit to our church. The Gift Aid we received last year was over £7,000.

Please talk to Paul Violet or myself if you need more information.

Thank you for your support.

David Westcott
(Church Treasurer)

G7 SUMMIT

June sees the UK hosting the 47th G7 Summit in Cornwall. Leaders from the G7 members of UK, Canada, USA, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, along with other invited leaders will meet at Carbis Bay near St Ives. The G7 Summit is an annual meeting where leaders come together in person to discuss world issues and this year will be important for leaders to focus on the international response and co-operation against the pandemic as well as the global climate crisis.

This year is also important as the newly elected Joe Biden will be attending (the 2020 US Summit was cancelled by President Trump) after initiating a return of the US to the Paris Agreement.

Together we must watch and pray that our leaders help the people of the world so that the poorest and most badly affected countries can recover and rebuild, and that the Summit is successful in setting out targets and initiatives for reducing greenhouse and promoting clean energy.

Martin Lloyd Church Green Team



‘Serving’ the Community

Wonford Community Centre hopes to re-open it's Thursday morning Cafe in May. In line with restrictions it will initially be outside and appropriate covid-safe measures will be in place.

The café offers reasonably priced hot drinks and snacks but just as important is the aim of a free conversation with every cuppa. If you are able to help out serving drinks and chatting with customers we would love to hear from you!

Helen (with my Wonford Community Centre Manager hat on!)

Members of The Mint Methodist Church Standing in Local Elections

Like Diana Moore, Mint Member, who successfully stood for the Green Party and now works tirelessly as Ward Councillor, two more members are now standing for election for the Greens on May 6th.

Andrew Bell is standing in the Devon County Elections. On the same ballot paper, Stuart Jackson is seeking to become Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC.)

Stuart writes:

Robert Peel set up the first UK police force 200 years ago. His championing of minority rights cost him many votes, but he followed his Christian conscience, rather than simply doing what would be popular.

In standing for PCC, in a small way, I'm trying to follow this great statesman. I'm seeking to make our Force more representative of all Council-Tax payers who fund it. At the moment only 31% of our Constables are women, and relatively few gain promotion, so only 21% of Sergeants are women. Based upon current local population, we should not only have more female officers but also 30% more officers than we currently do, from amongst groups of local people who experience racism.

My vision would be to uphold some of Peel's founding principles for the original Metropolitan Police, based on collaboration with the public to achieve crime prevention.

Please do use your vote on May the Sixth. And May the Force be with us!

Heavitree Pleasure Ground Parklife Café

I don't know how many of our Wonford "Contact" readers wander round their local area; but this past year has taught me much about mine. For over 25 years of living here, it has fascinated me that my nearby Park is called a **Pleasure Ground**, somehow that is "old fashioned". But then, this area of Exeter was not part of the "city of Exeter" until early 1900s. On my daily "COVID-19" walks I have had much pleasure within it. So, it has certainly lived up to its title.

Within the large expanse, there are many big old trees of a great variety. I wish there was a recognised Tree Trail published, like the one around the nearby Higher Cemetery; which is another rather special place to visit, reflect and walk around. There is plenty of space for families in its rolling landscape and tennis courts, a bowling green and basketball court - besides the Won stream on the edge of its farthest side. Then this January, almost opposite Ben's Manse, the ground was being cleared and dug up! And, as the months have gone by, the Community Café is taking shape. I still don't know whether it will have PV Solar panels on its roof, like the one in Belmont Park. But this Café is tucked under some lovely big old trees; so, maybe it would not be able to generate much electricity. Currently, beside the building site, there's a big poster displaying children's artwork showing drawings of what they like about the park. I certainly live in a lovely part of Exeter.

Margretta Bowstead

Zoom Bible Studies

Deacon Becky Lovatt is planning to lead Zoom Bible Studies fortnightly on Thursday evenings at 7.30pm, based on her latest book "Metamorphic Lockdown". The Bible studies will be based on the Acts of the Apostles, "from early church through a post-Covid church and beyond"; which all sound very interesting. A group of us from Wonford joined her Zoom Bible Studies through Lent, and certainly some - including me - are hoping to join this series too. I understand they start on Thursday 22nd April and run through fortnightly to the last one on 5th August. Dates for May would be: 6th & 20th May, 7.30pm and they would need to register with Becky for the Zoom-link from her - deaconbecky@outlook.com

Margretta Bowstead

Prayer Focus for May

Prayer - Our Strongest Weapon - Pray Without Ceasing

As I write this month's prayer focus, the news that His Royal Highness, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh has passed away. Our prayers for our Queen & all the family. Thank God for his service over so long as Queen's Consort.

As the vaccination roll seems to be slowing down coronavirus infections & deaths, thank God for our NHS in the way they have handled the programme. Thank God for the scientists who have developed the vaccine. Don't forget to pray for those countries that are seeing infection rates rise to such a high level with deaths still in the thousands. Thinking just now of Brazil. There are many countries around the world that can't afford to buy vaccine. Pray that well-off countries will come to their aid and buy vaccine to send to those countries.

Keep up your prayers for the persecuted church. Many over this past year have commented that it wasn't the same to worship without singing in church. I wonder how you would feel if not only could you not sing but all your worship had to be in silence. This is the only way many in the persecuted church can worship.

Pray also for each other in our fellowship. Some bereaved, some with serious illness and some generally not coping as well through lockdowns and have lost confidence. Give thanks for those who are able to help the rest through this pandemic.

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 she 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

Services in May

Services at 10am and others are listed below. These will be in the Church and live streamed on Zoom and Facebook / YouTube

2nd	Prof Tony Wragg - All Age Worship
9th	Rev Ben Haslam - Communion Service
16th	John Allan
23rd	Mandy Denton (and others)
30th	Rev Ben Haslam

500th Edition

The next edition of Contact is the 500th!! We need to mark this with a special edition so please send me memories in words and pictures. These can be given to me in Church (photos) and I can scan them or email me.

Dial-a-Prayer



FREEPHONE numbers for prayers, reflections and news from the Methodist Church

Listen to a prayer: 0808 281 2514

**Listen to a pastoral message from the
President and
Vice President: 0808 281 2695**

Listen to our Podcast: 0808 281 2478

Prayer updated every Thursday, Presidential message updated every Monday, Methodist Podcast updated fortnightly on Thursday.

The deadline for items for the June 2021 Newsletter will be Sunday 16th May 2021. 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