

Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

April 2017
(No: 457)



Minister: Rev Bruce Sawyer (01392 256716)



Wonford is a
Fairtrade church

The **Methodist** Church 

www.wonfordmethodistchurch.org.uk



A Message From The Minister

Dear Friends,

On Ash Wednesday, the circuit ministers had an away day at St. Rita's Retreat & Conference Centre, Honiton. During the closing worship, we were told that St. Rita is the saint of hopeless causes and that her symbol is a rose. Apparently on her death bed she asked for a rose from the garden of the home she used to live in. Despite being winter, a single rose was found flowering there, which was brought to her, and was seen to symbolise that through simple faith, the 'impossible' might be granted. And each of us was given a rose as we left.

I decided to try and dry the rose out, so that I could place it somewhere visible throughout Lent as a reminder of all that we thought about that day. About a week later I looked at it before I went to a staff meeting. After hanging it upside down, it had shrivelled and was crisp and had no scent. When I arrived at the meeting, I noticed my colleague's rose in a vase, full of colour and far more attractive to look at.

I've found this comparison between the two roses quite startling. What was it within me that sought to cling to this rose and make it last through Lent, and in the process so quickly lose the beauty of it? Why did I not allow myself to simply enjoy the rose's colour and scent whilst it lasted?

As I ponder this, I am reminded of Ecclesiastes 3:1 – "For everything there is a season". This was the wisdom that the author of Ecclesiastes came to appreciate. All things, however hard or painful, however fruitful or enjoyable, have their time. They will come to an end. Sometimes, when this might be something difficult, we long for an end to come, for a new season. During these times, such wisdom may well be a source of encouragement – things will pass, we will not be overwhelmed, there will be a new season. But such wisdom may be more of a challenge when things have been going well. How good are we, individually and collectively, at recognising that there is a season for everything? That there comes a time when even that which has worked well or been a source of enjoyment must come to an end. Are we able to recognise this as part of the natural rhythm of life, to accept the end of something not with a sense of failure but of gratitude for that season within God's purposes? Or do we try to cling to these things and miss the beauty of what God is doing in this moment, like me with the rose?

As we journey through Lent toward Good Friday and Easter we are encouraged to embrace again the different times of Jesus' life and ministry, especially throughout Holy Week. From the celebration of Palm Sunday, to the intimacy of Bethany, the humility of the upper room, the anguish of the

garden and of betrayal and denial, the pain and the loneliness of Good Friday, the confusion and emptiness of Saturday, and finally to the joy and transformation of Easter. In this we are reminded that seasons follow a pattern of death leading into new life. The ending of one season prepares for the next, but both are necessary. There can be no Easter without Good Friday.

If we struggle in this way, we are in good company! I am reminded of Jesus' words to Mary when he appears to her at the tomb on Easter morning. As she recognises who Jesus is, Jesus says to her "Do not cling to me" (John 20:17). As much as Mary might long for a return to all that she knew and enjoyed about Jesus' earthly ministry, there is a new season ahead, one that Mary (or we) cannot enjoy if we attempt to cling to the past. Jesus must return to his Father so that a new season can come, where His Spirit is poured out among them. His words to Mary are an invitation to her (and us) not to return to an old life, a past season, but to enter new life.

**With every blessing,
Bruce**

Dates For April

Coffee

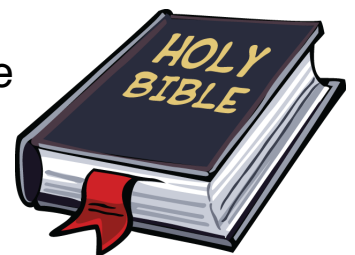
2nd	Madeline & David	9th	Jenny & Fran
16th	Helen	23rd	Rose & Paul
30th	Ruth & Jenny		

Flowers

2nd	Eileen	9th	Helen
16th	Easter Sunday - Mandy	23rd	Eileen
30th	Melanie		

Minister's Monthly Bible Study Group

This group meets in the lounge at 2pm normally on the third Thursday each month. All are welcome. This month they are continuing their study of The Beatitudes - Matthew 5 v6.



27th 2.00 p.m. Bible Study in the lounge.

Home Group

Tuesday Home group will not meet during the Easter holidays. We resume on Tuesday April 18th at 7.30pm at the Manse. We will be following the study of the book of Ruth, recently undertaken by the Away group. Please join us if you would like to. All are welcome.

Monika

Circuit News

Axminster Church

On the 19th January, at the Circuit Meeting, Deacon Becky Lovatt gave an inspiring account of the work being undertaken by the Axminster Church. We are very grateful to Becky for allowing us to print some extracts from her talk.

The church at Axminster has been on a long journey. The building at Lyme Road is in need of a lot of repair, and due to a lack of disposable income and an ageing congregation it was really a non-starter. Over the summer we prayed hard and investigated several options for the furtherance of our fellowship. One of those options was an exciting opportunity for Axminster Methodist Church to become a worshipping community at the heart of a new community project.

Pippins community and Business centre has been born out of the vision of the Town council and Axminster Churches to take over a newly refurbished house on Lyme Road and create in it a hub for the community. The church has obtained a permanent room in the building which has been christened the 'Upper Room'.

The Circuit gave us a loan against the sale of the Church building of £2,500 to cover the cost of 15 new, comfortable chairs and the first 6 months rent, for which we are very grateful. Axminster carpets have gifted us with a new carpet and underlay and many people from the community have lent a hand to make it a warm and welcoming worship space.

I believe that as Christians we are called to sow seeds of God's Kingdom, and not to focus solely on getting bottoms on seats on a Sunday morning. However, at our first service in the Upper Room we did not have enough seats. I feel that the universal church, not just the Methodist one, needs to rethink what it means by church. In my opinion it can no longer be about



what happens for an hour on a Sunday morning alone, and it is hoped that the 'Upper Room' might go some way towards bringing God into the lives of those that do not yet know him.

As part of Churches together in Axminster we were asked in the summer if we would provide hospitality for the 'Rise Hub'. This is a project, spear headed by the police, to reach out to those affected by drug and alcohol addiction. At the beginning, some eight weeks ago, we were there solely to make tea and coffee, but over the weeks the relationship has changed. We have found ourselves praying with and being there, for users of the group.

We provided Christmas lunch for 30 people, from town councils, to the police, from Rise workers to the clients. We shared a meal, we sang Christmas carols, and everyone received a gift of homemade chocolate and a little booklet explaining the real meaning of Christmas. Francis of Assisi once said, "preach the gospel – use words if you have to". That day, as I stood in the corner and watched as the gospel of God's love was embodied in that room, it felt like Jesus himself was dancing on the table. If that is not worship, or that is not church, I don't know what is.

Since then one of the Rise Hub councillors has welcomed the suggestion that as part of the enrichment programme, we could offer a Bible study, or faith discussion group, maybe even Tuesday church in the 'Upper Room'. Tomorrow we launch 'Little Pips', a parent and toddler group run in partnership with the Children centre. There are also conversations taking place to open a Community café on a Wednesday, in partnership with the 'Project', a charity working with young people with mental health issues. The highly successful and well respected Job Club, which is yet another churches together initiative, has also moved into its new home at Pippin. So, as you can see it is a wonderful opportunity to do church differently, to think outside the box, and meet people where they are. I firmly believe that God is doing a new thing, and he wants us to be a part of it.

Axminster Methodist Church is moving into a new phase of their journey with God, but I am convinced that this is just phase one. I am sure that there are many improvements we can make to the room, and it is hoped that we might be able to use some of the money raised from the sale of the old building to further God's mission in this new place.

Becky Lovatt

THANK YOU from Sylvia & Tom Crawford

We would like to thank all at Wonford for their prayers, cards and messages during Tom's recent illness. We are glad to say that prayers have been answered and Tom is recovering well.

God Bless, Tom and Sylvia.



What's the best gift God could give you?

***Tuesdays, 7.30pm – 9.00pm (25th April – 13th June)
The Lounge, Wonford Methodist Church***

Life Explored is an informal and relaxed course for anyone who wants to find contentment and happiness in life. Over seven weeks the course will explore the Bible story (creation, fall, redemption, new creation) as follows:

25th April – The Good God
2nd May – The Trustworthy God
9th May – The Generous God
16th May – The Liberating God
23rd May – The Fulfilling God
6th June – The Life-Giving God
13th June – The Joyful God

The course features a combination of short films and Bible interaction and will begin with a selection of desserts! You don't need to know anything about the Bible, and you won't be asked to sing or pray. You can ask any question you like, or you can just sit and listen. Whoever you are, whatever you're thinking, Life Explored is a place for you to discover the greatest gift in the universe.

The course will be led by Bruce Sawyer, John & Ann Nicholson, Alan Rothwell and Joan & Tony Wragg – please speak with one of us if you are interested in coming or to find out more.

WONFORD METHODIST CHURCH GENERAL CHURCH MEETING

After the morning service on Sunday 2 April 2017 we will hold our General Church Meeting (at approx. 11am in the Chapel). This meeting is open to all within the life of the church at Wonford. The meeting encourages us to reflect on some aspects of our life together. We will also be reflecting on one aspect of our calling: Service – by being a good neighbour in the community, challenging injustice and using our resources to support the Church in its mission in the world.

Please do put the date in your diary and join with us on the day. This year we are not holding a bring and share lunch following the meeting as on the same day we are hosting the Celebrate Together service at 4pm which will be followed by a bring and share tea.

Alison Howell

Volunteering Opportunities

These opportunities come from Exeter - City of Sanctuary. Further details and an application form from info@exeter.cityofsanctuary.org

Opportunity Title: Events Support

Description: Support with running ExCoS awareness raising and/or fundraising events. This may include pre-event organisation, as well as assisting set up and running of the events and associated activities on the day.

What we are looking for: Individuals over 18 years, who are happy to engage and interact with the public. In some cases, but not all, this may involve sharing information regarding ExCoS and its work in Exeter.

Practical considerations: Events may often take place on weekends and/or evenings. Need to be easily contactable by email and phone.



Opportunity Title: Campaigns Support

Description: Support with running current ExCoS campaigns, including activities such as:

- Letter writing to key decision makers (local, regional and national)
- Email updates to ExCoS supporters
- Researching situation surrounding campaign issues in Exeter (by phone/email)

Support developing and organising other campaign actions as appropriate and relevant to the current campaign

What we are looking for: Individual(s) over 18 years, with experience in campaigns and advocacy and with some knowledge of local and regional politics. Individual(s) with good writing skills. Individual(s) with an interest in keeping up-to-date with current situation and changes and with an ability to respond in a timely manner to new developments.

Practical considerations: Access to computer and internet essential.

Opportunity Title: Communications Support

Description: Support with varied communications activities associated with ExCoS, including:

- Managing social media and website
- Writing content for varied outputs, including: leaflets, exhibits, displays newsletter, issue briefs
- Design of print materials

What we are looking for:

Individual(s) over 18 years, with skills and experiences in one, or more, of following areas:

- managing social media/websites
- plain English writing
- design

Individual(s) with an interest in keeping up-to-date with current issues relating to asylum seekers and refugees and the developments and news of key national and local agencies.

Practical considerations: Access to computer and internet essential.



Stop the Traffik

St. James' Church would like to invite you to an event they are holding on Monday 24th April 2017 at 7:30pm. They will be having a talk from the South West Lead of 'Stop the Traffik', Robert Alexander - they feel that this is an important opportunity for people to learn about the problems of Modern Slavery and specifically, Human Trafficking.

For further information about this organisation ('Stop the Traffik'), please click on the following link: <http://www.stophetraffik.org/uk>

Famine In East Africa

Protracted civil conflicts, entrenched economic crises, droughts and unpredictable rainfall have led to widespread food insecurity across East Africa and neighbouring countries such as Yemen. On 20 February 2017 it was announced that South Sudan had reached tipping point and was declared as officially affected by famine.

Wonford Methodist Church has responded quickly and extremely generously to this catastrophic situation by supporting the appeal being managed by 'All We Can'. In just a few short weeks we have raised £622.06 which will be sent to 'All We Can' so they can work with international humanitarian aid partners to respond to the immediate urgent needs in South Sudan and Somalia. Malnutrition is widespread, in some countries water is scarce and the need for lifesaving aid; food, water and sanitation is critical.

Thank you all for your most generous contributions.

David Westcott



Community Update

The Phoenix Suite

Thank you to everyone who offered to contribute to the new boiler but we are pleased to announce that Exeter Board and two friendly DCC councillors have given grants for this! As soon as the boiler is installed the community events/activities/workshops planned can start. There will be a Community Café on Monday afternoons and Thursday mornings - if you are able to help please contact Volunteer Co-ordinator Bernice volunteer-wclcentre@outlook.com

Surgery Garden

There will be a work party on 13th May to create a wildflower garden on the overgrown patch near the Surgery and to tidy and plant up the beds. Details to follow.

FoodCycle

Every Tuesday at the Community Centre Foodcycle prepare a three course meal from surplus food collected from supermarkets. All welcome to join them at 6.00pm for a delicious, nutritious, friendly free meal!

Wonford Festival

This will take place on 10th June and we hope there will be stalls, activities and entertainment! Please put the date in your diary and start thinking about how you can be involved.

Wonford COGs

Wonford COGs (Community Organisations and Groups) meet every three months at the Church to discuss what is happening in the area, what plans the different groups/organisations have and how we can support each other. Our next meeting is on Wednesday April 19th. We will be discussing the Wonford Festival so please come along with your ideas!

Helen Moore





@ Wonford

"Messy Church" is a place for people of all ages to enjoy sharing time together and exploring stories from the Bible.

It includes times of craft and messy activities, stories, songs and sharing a meal together.

4-6pm once a month on a Sunday at
Wonford Methodist Church.

Dates and themes:

29th January – Love God

26th February – Love your neighbour

26th March – Love your world

30th April – Easter Celebration

28th May – The Church's Birthday!

25th June – Making a difference

Prayer Focus for April

**He arose! He arose!
Alleluia! Christ arose!**

Robert Lowry (Songs of Fellowship 378)

Week beginning Sunday 2nd

In this 5th week of Lent as we meditate on Jesus' temptations in the Wilderness, please pray that we will stay faithful to the call of God on our own lives.

Pray also for our General Church Meeting this morning where we choose Stewards and Church Council members for the year ahead.

Thank God for the blessing of the 'Celebrate Together' service this afternoon.

Week beginning Sunday 9th

Please pray that Jesus will draw many people to Himself through the 'Walk of Witness' and Cathedral service this Good Friday and for all who will take part in bringing this witness to the people of Exeter.

Pray also for the witness of our own walk from Killerton to Silverton in the afternoon and for the service there led by Tony and the Music Group.

Week beginning Sunday 16th Easter Day Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

As we celebrate Jesus' victory over death, please pray for those you know who have still to find the saving grace and love of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Pray also for the green shoots in our Young Church, that they will remain close to Jesus and thrive spiritually as He walks with them...the Church's next generation.

Thank and praise God for sending His only Son, Jesus, to be a sacrifice to save us...sinners one and all.

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Week beginning Sunday 23rd

Please pray that God will prosper the work of Bruce and the Discipleship and Outreach Group as they start the new sessions of 'Life Explored'.

Also for the team helping to 'Open the Book' this Tuesday afternoon to the pupils of Countess Wear Primary School in this new term.

Thank God for the great opportunity to watch 'Risen' at the Film Service tonight.

Week beginning Sunday 30th Messy Church

Please pray for Wonford people, and others, attending the Plymouth and Exeter District Synod on Saturday, asking the Lord to guide their discussions and bless any decisions taken.

Thank God for relationships formed within Messy Church...for Bruce, the leaders (who do so much preparation) and volunteers as they all share the Good News of the Risen Christ.

Phone Prayer Link

Should you, or those you know, wish to be supported in prayer, the first contacts are Michael or Judith Maher (01392 214789). 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 either Margretta Bowstead (437329) or Margaret Kearns (679949).

After Church 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

Being Christian in the Community of Wonford

I'm sure you will all have noticed our array of Solar panels on our Church Hall roof, and you'll know that they generate electricity when the sun shines on them. Do you know that if we aren't needing any power at the time when it's generated, then the 'spare' power goes into our local community to be used by our neighbours: Lidl's, the Doctor's Surgery or nearby homes? – a benefit for them. Of course we paid to have the Solar panels; and it was money we decided to spend for a number of reasons. Do you know that we "earn" over £1,800 each year from the power we produce? They've been up over 6 years and soon we'll have cleared their original cost.

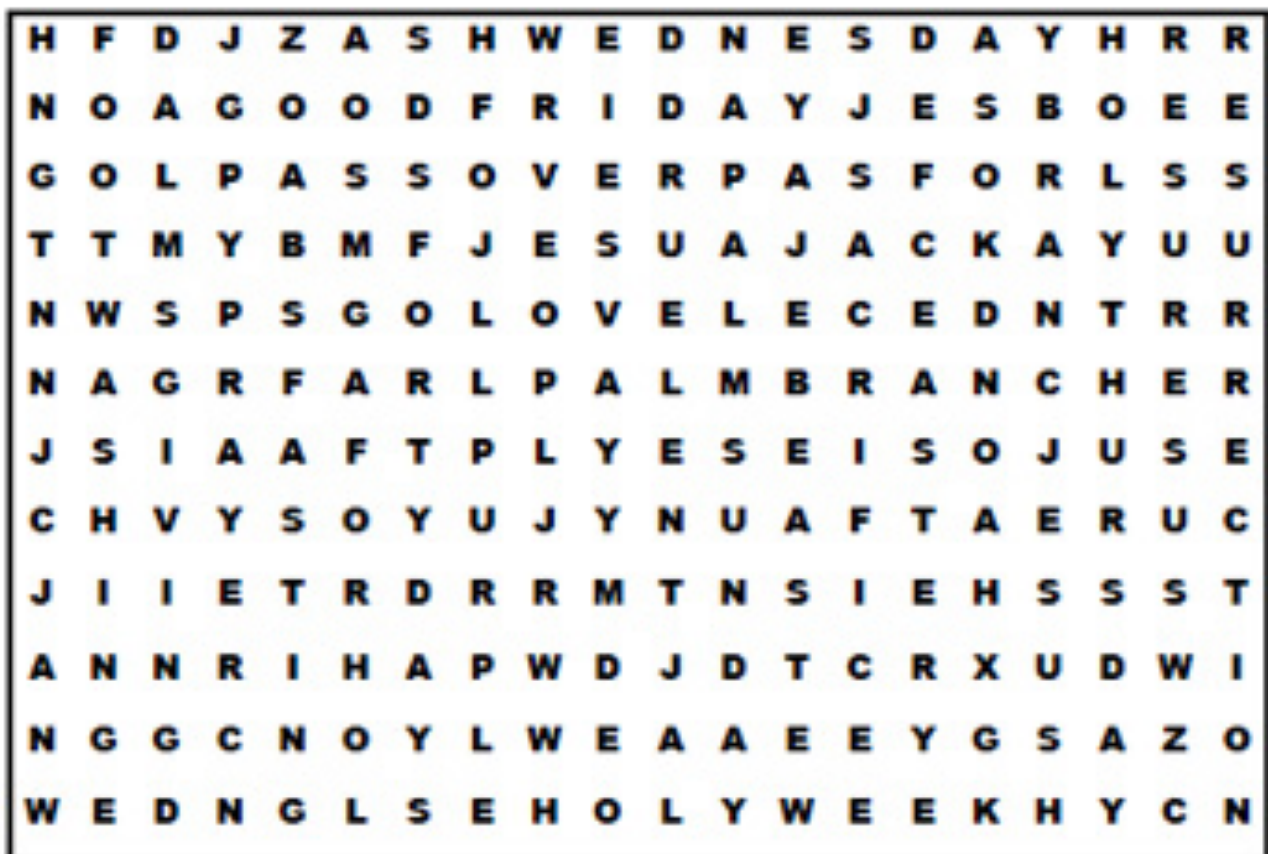
Have you heard of the ECO church? – a movement which encourages churches to discuss and re-think their impact in "cleaner and greener" ways. At Wonford Methodist Church, over the last 6 years we've begun that journey. We may not have a graveyard around the church to help maintain a "greener" wildlife-friendly place, but our Solar panels are a first step.

Do you have a concern for our Wonford community? Do you seek to serve Christ in Wonford? Do you think "green" energy is a way forward? Do you

want to learn more how we could become an accredited ECO Church? You might like to look at the following link: <http://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/> . This might provide a way of getting a group of people to share the concern and root it within an understanding of this being part of our discipleship. If you are interested in being part of such a group in our church, do have a word with me.

Margretta Bowstead

ON THE ROAD TO EASTER WORD SEARCH



Ash	Holy Week	Palm Branch
Wednesday	Holy Thursday	Forty Days
Sacrifice	Good Friday	Jesus
Almsgiving	Holy Saturday	Passover
Prayer	Easter	Foot Washing
Fasting	Palm Sunday	Resurrection
Lent	Purple	Love



Dates For Your Diary

April 2017

Sun 2nd	10.00 a.m.	Rev Bruce Sawyer - All Age Worship
	11.00 a.m.	Annual General Church meeting - all welcome **
	4.00 p.m.	Celebrate Together Service, with Bring & Share tea **
Sun 9th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Paul Collings
	6.30 p.m.	Rev Jonathan Froggatt - Sacrament Service
Thu 13th	6.30 p.m.	Maundy Thursday Communion Service with Rev Terry Spencer and Caroline Sawyer
Fri 14th	10.00 a.m.	Good Friday United Service at Cathedral Rev Graham Thompson
	2.00 p.m.	Meet at Killerton for walk to Silverton with tea/coffee from 4pm
	5.00 p.m.	Good Friday Service at Silverton
Sat 15th	10.00 a.m.	Bring flowers/help with decorating the Chapel (Until 12pm)
Sun 16th	7.30 a.m.	Easter Communion at the Quay
	10.00 a.m.	Rev Bruce Sawyer - Easter Sacrament
	6.30 p.m.	Rev Alan Rothwell - Easter Prayer & Praise
Tue 18th	10.00 a.m.	Roundabout Café (until 12pm) **
	7.30 p.m.	Home Group meets at 20 Whipton Lane
Sat 22nd	8.30 a.m.	Monthly Prayers & Coffee
Sun 23rd	10.00 a.m.	Rev Steve Santry
	5.30 p.m.	Film 'Risen' **
Mon 24th	7.30 p.m.	'Stop the Traffik' talk at St James' Church **
Tue 25th	7.30 p.m.	Start of the 'Life Explored' course in the lounge **
Thu 27th	2.00 p.m.	Monthly Bible Study in the lounge **
Sun 30th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Bruce Sawyer
	4.00 p.m.	Messy Church - Easter Celebrations **

**** 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

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

Tuesday

9.15 a.m. Weekly Prayers in the Quiet Room
10.00 a.m. Men's Coffee and Games Morning
10.00 a.m. The Roundabout Café *(3rd Tuesday each month)*
7.30 p.m. Home Group Bible Study Meeting *(fortnightly)*

Thursday

2.00 p.m. Bible Study *(3rd Thursday each month)*

Friday

9.30 a.m. Friday Toddlers Group ***A***
2.00 p.m. Friday Fellowship in the lounge

Saturday

8.30 a.m. Monthly Prayers & Coffee *(3rd Saturday each month)*

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 May 2017 Newsletter will be Sunday 16th April 2017. 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