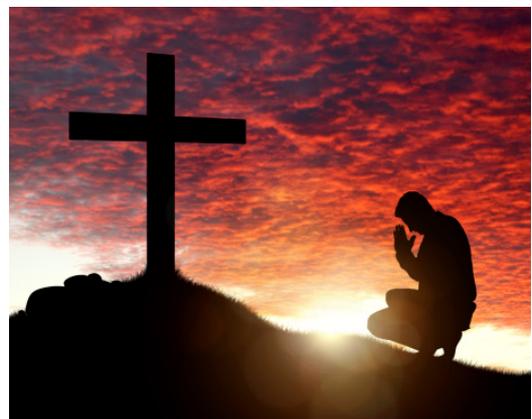
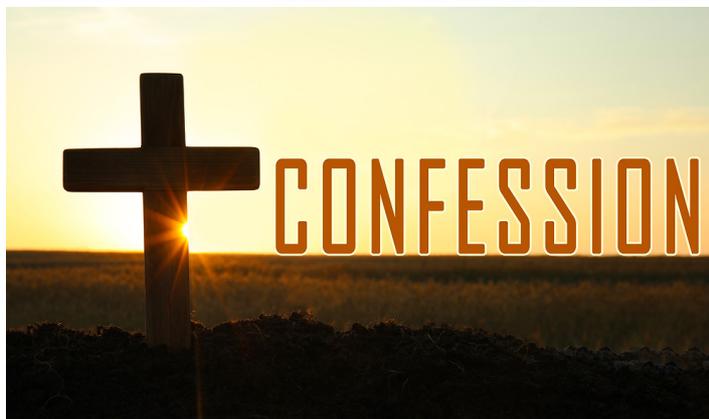


Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

August / September 2022

(No: 512)



Minister: Rev Ben Haslam (01392 256716)



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Fairtrade church

The **Methodist** Church 

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A Message From The Minister

Dear Friends,

Forgive me for beginning with a cliché, but confession really is good for the soul. In fact, it's not just healthy but essential. Having done all the practical things which need doing in order to restore Israel to its former position (bringing the people back, rebuilding the wall etc), Nehemiah begins the really important work: getting those people right with God. This is where the rubber really hits the road. The Israelites assemble, with all the classic outward signs of repentance – sackcloth, ashes, the whole lot. They are serious about this. They realise that it would be pointless to reassemble as God's people, even with all the outward signs of godliness, without reorienting their hearts towards their creator. So they confess. Confession has two meanings and both are in play here. Confession means owning up to our shortcomings and sins, and it also means proclaiming the faith out loud. The great prayer of confession in Nehemiah 9 begins with the ringing declaration, "May people worship your glorious Name, though exalted above all worship and praise. You are God, you alone....". They recount God's creation of the world, His saving acts throughout history, before culminating in a plea for forgiveness, all underpinned by an assurance that, as God has been faithful to His people in the past, so He will continue to be as they begin this new chapter.

Confession (in the sense of confessing your sins) isn't fashionable just now. We tend to think that, whilst not perfect, we are fundamentally ok as we are. We might be thoroughly good people in our own estimation, but it takes more than that to stand in the utterly holy presence of God. We need to be comprehensively washed clean, and this only the blood of Christ can achieve. When we confess, we bring yet more of our life under the Lordship of Christ, we bring something more to be washed clean. Christian confession is, therefore, profoundly hopeful. We are encouraged to bring our brokenness before God, not so we can be condemned, humiliated, ground into the dust, but so that we can be delivered from the stranglehold of our failings, making room for God's grace to grow on our lives. Confession in the sense of proclaiming God's goodness is equally important. It reminds us just how much we have to be thankful for, and builds our consciousness of God's presence in our lives. This is how we walk with God day by day: by bringing the whole of our lives to Him, even (perhaps especially) the bad bits, and by consciously bringing to mind His goodness and His readiness to forgive. The Israelites weren't satisfied with

being back in their homeland with their shiny new wall. The practicalities over, they realise that the really vital work had to begin: that of rebuilding their relationship with God.

With every blessing
Ben Haslam

Dates For August / September 2022

Coffee

August

7th Maggie S & David
14th TBA
21st Terry & Margaret
28th Melanie & Eileen

September

4th Rose & Paul
11th Elaine & Graham
18th TBA
25th TBA

Bible Study Group

Monika and Bill warmly extend an open invitation to anyone to an afternoon tea at 18 Tuckfield Close on Friday 5th August at 3pm.

We will recommence after a short summer break on Friday 2nd September at 3pm, when we will complete our study of Isaiah.

We would love some more folk to join our group. We are a home group, currently meeting in the lounge at Church. We meet for Bible Study and fellowship for about an hour and a half on alternate Fridays.

Future dates include: 16th and 30th September. Our next theme is still up for discussion.

Please speak with Monika, the Westcott's, Terry or Liz to find out more!

The Away Group

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

Saturday Morning Fellowship (10.30 am – 12.00 pm)

We'd like to start with a big 'thank you' to all of you who celebrated the wonderful continent of Africa with us on the 23rd July by decorating the hall, enjoying the music, putting on a fabulous fashion show and sharing delicious African food - what a colourful and fantastic morning we had! Over the past few months we have really enjoyed getting together for a chat with

our coffee/tea & cake and having a fun & relaxing time every Saturday morning. We will continue to be 'open' throughout the summer holidays in August.

In September we are opening our doors up to anyone in the Wonford community and look forward to welcoming a few new people, alongside our regulars from church, so please do invite those you know to come along. Throughout the month we plan to have another popular quick quiz, a fundraising coffee morning in aid of Hospiscare and a morning of Art.

You are all welcome and it would be lovely to see you, either to be with us for the morning or even just pop in for a quick cuppa .

Mandy, Liz, Rose and Sue K

Roundabout Café

The Roundabout Café will meet on Tuesday 20th September 2022 when Alison will be telling us about her visit to Japan.

We meet from 10.00am until noon with coffee and cake. Everyone is welcome.



Green Team Article

What do you think about

a) Book of Things?

All of us already have an abundance of 'things' but occasionally we need a 'thing' we haven't got – perhaps a travel cot for a young visitor, a tool for a job in the home or garden, equipment for painting or a trolley for a large purchase.

Instead of buying new we could perhaps borrow from someone at Church?

We are thinking of putting together a book where people offer 'things' that they would be willing to lend to other Church folk.

So if you were planning a party you might look in the book to see if anyone has a gazebo that you could borrow, if you have visitors you might see if anyone has any air beds or if you're decorating you might look to see if anyone had a wallpapering table.

If someone was offering what you wanted you would get in touch to arrange when and where to collect, possibly at Saturday Fellowship.

Also, maybe you would like to try out a piece of equipment before you buy it e.g. an exercise bike

b) Sharing our Skills?

We have an abundance of skills within our Church and it would be wonderful to find more ways to share these with each other and potentially with the wider community.

We could have workshops as part of Saturday Fellowship – repairing items, advice on laptops and social media, help filling in forms/putting together a CV or learning how to knit, play guitar, speak Spanish.....

Or maybe one-off help perhaps from a working party to clear a bramble patch, decorate a room or perhaps a tip run (particularly for those of us without cars!)

Perhaps someone needs help with dog walking and someone else can't have a pet themselves but would love to take a dog for a walk

These ideas need to be explored further (particularly with regard to Safeguarding and Confidentiality) but if they happen in some form they would encourage connections, strengthen relationships and show faith in action.

If you like these ideas or have any comments/suggestions please chat to one of the Green Team or email Helen helenbigwood@hotmail.com or Liz lizsimonetti3@gmail.com

**Thank you Helen and Liz
Church Green Team**

Green Team (Alison Hobbs, Alison Howell, Helen Moore, Martin Lloyd, Sue Keatt, Liz Simonetti)

Prayer Focus for August

Prayer – Our Strongest Weapon – Pray Without Ceasing

Week Commencing Aug 7th

He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
he refreshes my soul.

Psalm 23: 2-3a

Pray for those who work long and busy shifts in our local hospital. We think particularly of all those in our congregation who often miss worship and church activities due to shift work. Bless and encourage them daily.

Week Commencing August 14th

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.
I do not give to you as the world gives.
Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.
John 14:27

Pray for all who are troubled by many things. Holy Spirit, counsellor and guide, may your peace flood our lives and bring your comfort and strength.

Week Commencing August 21st

He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."
Psalms 46:10

We pray that wars may cease, whether they be conflicts around the world or the battles in our own lives. Lord Almighty, you are with us. You are our fortress.

Week Commencing August 28th

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

Thank you Lord, that when we are weary, we can come to you for rest. Teach us your gentleness and humility [v 29].

Prayer Focus for September

Week Commencing September 4th

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'
This is the first and greatest commandment.

And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

Matthew 22: 37-39

The Methodist President's theme for this church year [September 2022-June 2023] is 'The Greatest Commandment'. Lord, teach us how to love you more and how to reach out to our neighbour with your love.

Week Commencing September 11th

Your word is a lamp to my feet

And a light to my path.

Psalms 119:105

Education Sunday: please pray for all those in education, both teaching and learning, as a new term gets underway.

Week Commencing September 18th

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Jeremiah 29:11

National 'Back to Church' Sunday.

Please pray for anyone returning or attending church for the first time today.

May they encounter love, feel at home and receive hope for the future.

Week Commencing September 25th

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me

To preach the gospel to the poor;

He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty

to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind,

To set at liberty those who are oppressed;

To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

Luke 4: 18-19

Anthony Boateng, the current Vice-President of the Methodist Conference is praying for revival in our churches. Let's join him in prayer for fresh vision to see God's kingdom come in powerful ways as we serve, love and share Jesus with people.

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

Statement on the Current Political Crisis in Sri Lanka

With the events in Sri Lanka this week, the Methodist Church in Britain has received two statements from Revd W. P. Ebenezer Joseph, President of Conference, Methodist Church, Sri Lanka and Chair of the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka.

Graham Thompson, President of the Methodist Conference, has offered this statement and prayer of support and solidarity in response:

In the past week we have witnessed the unravelling of the economic and political situation in Sri Lanka. The crisis is having a huge impact on the availability of food, fuel and medicine, causing great suffering for the Sri Lankan people. In response to the statements from our partners the Methodist Church, Sri Lanka and the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka (NCCSL), we join with their calls for a peaceful and swift resolution to the crisis.

The Methodist Church in Britain greatly values the partnership of the Methodist Church in Sri Lanka and the NCCSL, and their work in responding to this crisis. We stand in solidarity with them and support their calls for action to bring stability and pave the way for democratic elections. We share with them in the appeal for non-violent and peaceful activity, both on the part of protesters and the authorities in dealing with them.

We join in prayer using the prayer points received from Revd. W. P. Ebenezer Joseph.

Almighty and loving God, we pray for Sri Lanka, its people and for our Methodist Church partners. We give thanks for the work of the Methodist Church in Sri Lanka as they reach out and support the most vulnerable at this time of threat and insecurity. We ask that you strengthen them in all that they do in your Name.

We pray for political stability, peace and for the early formation of an all-party government. We pray for the evolution of a new political culture that will serve all people. We pray for relief for the many thousands who are suffering due to the economic hardships and trust that your abiding presence will be a source of comfort and strength for all.

In the name of Christ, **Amen.**

The Revd Graham Thompson
President of the Methodist Conference

The Greatest Commandment

The President of the Conference 2022/2023, the Revd Graham Thompson, says our relationship with a loving God sustains and opens us to God's abiding Spirit.



I first became truly aware of the activity of the Holy Spirit when in my early 20s I attended a teaching weekend at Cliff College. Until then my understanding of the 'abiding presence of God' had been purely theoretical. That weekend, I discovered how the Holy Spirit can bless and inspire as I allowed God to be at work in a way that I had not allowed before. The experience has not been a 'one off' as, throughout my ministry, I have been fortunate to witness others experience the same openness and the same blessing. I like to think that John Wesley's experience at Aldersgate Street was the same as mine at Cliff College! And, while there are some resonances, there are many differences. Wesley was an ordained Anglican with a theology and understanding that, at this stage, had not been granted to me. Even so, the journey from the theoretical to the personal – from the head to the heart – was similar. And I am convinced that each disciple of Jesus needs to understand as much as they can about God's activity (head) and to experience as much as they can (heart). We need both to be truly the people that God created us to be.

Love your God with all your heart

The presidential theme for 2022/2023 is 'The Greatest Commandment' (Matthew 22:37-39). Vice-President Anthony Boateng and I are concentrating on different aspects of the theme as we believe the Church should be filled with those who love God, others and themselves. We also need a fresh wind of the Holy Spirit to restore, revive and reignite us. In fact, we believe that each is necessary for the other. We should love

God and our neighbours as much as we love ourselves and, it is as we love like this, that we become ready for the new or fresh things that God wants to do in us and for us. To go a little deeper, our relationship with God should be continually evolving, maturing and deepening as we learn to live and minister together day by day. This happens when we love and trust each other. I am continually amazed that God is willing to trust me to be a servant of God and a presbyter in the Methodist Church. And I can only be the minister that I am called to be because my relationship with God sustains and enables me each day. A caveat, however, most relationships go through rocky patches and that has been my experience too!

Grounded in Love

A relationship with God, made possible through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and made real by the abiding Spirit is on offer to us all. Such a relationship transforms lives and enables God's purposes to be fulfilled. The basis of such a relationship is love and when we struggle to get things right with God we need to go back to first principles and consider the love we have – or don't have – for God. We love God, says the writer of 1 John (4:19) because God first loved us. God reaches out to us in Jesus and blesses us with the Holy Spirit as we invite God to share all our living with us. Such love is the kind that, to quote from the old marriage service, "grows and deepens with the years" (Methodist Service Book p.186). It isn't a crush or a phase but results in the gift of oneself to the other; utterly and totally. We become open to God's Spirit when we are grounded in such a relationship. Throughout this year both Anthony and I want to encourage others to find hope and security in their relationship with God. In an ever-changing world (culturally, economically and post-pandemic) it is our relationships that sustain us. We may not always get things right; we will make mistakes but, together with God and one another, we can be the best versions of ourselves. At the same time, we should be ready for the fresh wind of God to blow through our Church. As we make ourselves open to God, we can expect new and exciting things to happen as we love God and one another and invite God to be at work in and through us.

Article from Summer 2022 Edition of 'the connexion'.

Dates For Your Diary

August 2022

Fri 5th	3.00 p.m.	Bible Study Group Tea at 18 Tuckfield Close **
Sat 6th	10.30 a.m.	Saturday Morning Fellowship (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 7th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Malcolm & Chris Carter
Tue 9th	7.00 p.m.	Meet Bishop Nanda at Crediton MC **
Sat 13th	10.30 a.m.	Saturday Morning Fellowship (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 14th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Ben Haslam - Sacrament.
Sat 20th	10.30 a.m.	Saturday Morning Fellowship (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 21st	10.00 a.m.	Paul Violet
Sat 27th	10.30 a.m. 3.00 p.m.	Saturday Morning Fellowship (until 12.00 pm) ** Service of Welcome for Rev Daniel Haylett (New Chair of Plymouth & Exeter District) at St Thomas Methodist Church **
Sun 28th	10.00 a.m.	David Bradford

September 2022

Fri 2nd	3.00 p.m.	Bible Group meet in the lounge **
Sat 3rd	10.30 a.m.	Saturday Morning Fellowship (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 4th	10.00 a.m. 6.30 p.m.	Mandy Denton - All Age Worship Circuit Service at Wonford MC
Sat 10th	10.30 a.m.	Saturday Morning Fellowship (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 11th	10.00 a.m. 6.30 p.m.	Rev Ben Haslam - Sacrament Rev Ben Haslam - Sacrament
Fri 16th	3.00 p.m.	Bible Group meet in the lounge **
Sat 17th	10.30 a.m.	Saturday Morning Fellowship (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 18th	10.00 a.m. 6.30 p.m.	Prof Tony Wragg - Themed Preaching Café Church
Tue 20th	10.00 a.m.	Roundabout Café (until 12pm) **
Sat 24th	10.30 a.m.	Saturday Morning Fellowship (until 12.00 pm) **
Sun 25th	10.00 a.m.	Rev Terry Spencer
Fri 30th	3.00 p.m.	Bible Group meet in the lounge **

**** 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 *(not every week)*

Monday

- 7.30 p.m. The Away Group meets *(Fortnightly)*

Tuesday

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

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. Saturday Fellowship Meeting

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 October 2022 Newsletter will be Sunday 11th September 2022. 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