

Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

February 2017
(No: 455)



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 Boxing Day we went to Exmouth beach to enjoy the unseasonably mild weather. Whilst kicking a rugby ball around with my brothers, a little girl and her brother walked by. The girl stopped and said to me, “You come to my school”. I asked her which was her school, and she said Countess Wear, and so I said “Yes, I come and take assemblies with the Open the Book team”. We then talked for a little while about how she liked the assemblies and she showed me her new trainers that she’d had for Christmas that lit up.

I had a similar experience after the Girls’ Brigade Christingle. The girls led a fantastic service and, whilst holding their Christingles, beautifully sang ‘Like a candle flame’ [Singing the Faith 176]. Afterwards we shared drinks and mince pies in the hall with parents, friends and church members who had come to support them. Despite having been to several Girls’ Brigade evenings as the girls were preparing, a couple of the girls were keen to introduce me to their parents not as the minister at Wonford but as someone who comes into their school (again referring to the Open the Book team).

The chorus of ‘Like a candle flame’ reminds us ‘God is with us’, and we celebrate that God has come to us. I have recently taken six classes at St. Peter’s School as part of their RE GCSE, sharing something of the history of the Methodist Church and the life of Wonford Methodist Church with the students. One of the defining characteristics of early Methodism was how they went to where people were to share God’s love – visiting the sick and those in prison, spending time with those who lived in poverty or worked in terrible conditions. They believed and experienced that God in Jesus had come to them, where they were, and in return responded by following Jesus’ call to follow, and to go.

Many people have commented to me how the new Lidl’s is a huge improvement, and that it also creates a wonderful opportunity for us – our building is so much more visible from that area of Wonford than previously. This is true and it is right that we consider how we might use this opportunity, and what we could learn (notice the lack of any substantial fence) – please do share any ideas with me or the leadership team. But as I reflect on the encounters above and our Methodist heritage, I find myself increasingly wondering how we might be known as those followers of Christ who go to where people are, and are found among them...

In what ways might people say of us, individually and collectively as Christ’s disciples, ‘I know you, you come to my...’ ?

**With every blessing,
Bruce**

Dates For February

Coffee

5th Fran & David
12th Tony & Friend
19th Sue Lloyd & Jenny
26th Elaine & Graham



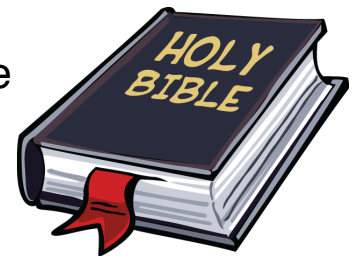
Flowers

5th Barbara J
12th Margretta
19th Melanie W
26th Mandy



Minister's Monthly Bible Study Group

This group meets in the lounge at 2pm normally on the third Thursday each month. All are welcome and if you'd like to learn more, do speak with Bronwen or Clifford Maddicks.



23rd 2.00 p.m. Bible Study in the lounge.

Home Group

A warm welcome is extended to anyone who would like to join us. We enjoy looking at the Bible together and we have fun with it too. We try to make it as relevant as possible to our daily lives while also enjoying the time we spend together. This month they are starting a 6-part series called 'Life on the Front Line'. Please speak to Monika if you would like to come and join us! New members always welcome. **NOTE - Two dates below are both Wednesday**

8th 7.30pm 20 Whipton Lane
22nd 7.30pm 20 Whipton Lane

Marriage Sessions - Advance Notice

The next of these evenings for couples will be on Thursday 30th March, 7.30pm-9.30pm. Further details in the next issue, but put the date in your diary now (all couples welcome, no need to have attended the first evening).

Membership Course

**The Lounge (Wonford Methodist Church)
Wednesdays – 1st, 8th, 22nd & 29th March
7.30 - 9.00pm**

Bruce will be running a course aimed at helping people explore membership of the Methodist Church. The course will consider areas such as:

- What is church?
- How do we read the Bible?
- Is there anything distinctive about Methodism?
- What does membership of the Methodist church mean?

If you would like to become a member of the church, want to consider if membership is for you, or simply would like to know more about one of these areas then why not try it out? The sessions will be relaxed, where all questions are welcome.

Please let Rev'd Bruce Sawyer know if you are interested.

Good News from Syria

In December, we asked you to pray for Gaith, our team member in Aleppo, who has been faithfully serving the people of Syria despite constant danger.



Thanks for your prayers! We're happy to say Gaith has been in touch with good news. Closed streets are opening up and some of those who fled Aleppo are beginning to return.

Gaith* says, 'We have had very peaceful weeks in Aleppo, where suddenly all the barriers and walls separating us from one another were dismantled. We could suddenly walk through areas – less than five hundred metres from our Bible House – which had been cut off from us for years! There we were walking those streets that had been part of our childhood and tears were streaming down our cheeks!'

The Word of God Bringing Joy

Many of you donated to provide copies of children's Bibles that were distributed in Syrian churches over Christmas. Gaith explains, 'We have been running all the Christmas programmes at churches and schools and it's been such a joy seeing children and young people receive the word of God with such joy!'

'We asked one girl what she would do with the Bible when she got home. She looked at us and asked: "Don't you know what you do with Bibles? Well, I'll tell you. These books are holy and they are for 'the inside', so that God will live in you. Yes, that's what he wants. I'll read them and read them until I know that he's really inside me."



Citizens Return

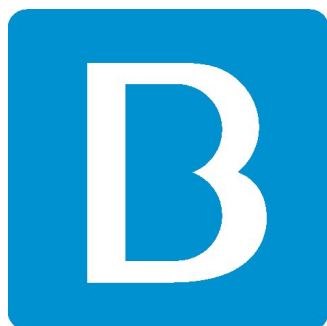
Some who had fled are returning to Aleppo, and many found their way to the Bible Society HQ, Bible House, from where Gaith runs the Christian bookshop. Throughout the conflict Bible House became a place of stability and comfort for many as they tried to make sense of the situation.

This Christmas was busier than ever. 'It was so much fun being at Bible House, meeting people who had just returned from various parts of Syria – or even Lebanon,' says Gaith, 'So many questions were asked and even though so many are still without answers, we are looking ahead with a lot of hope!'

Thank you so much for all your prayers. It's been a huge encouragement. Please continue to pray for Gaith and the team as they go about their work, and for peace and stability in Syria. Although fighting has largely subsided in Aleppo, the broader conflict continues.

*name changed to protect identity

Author: Bible Society, 13 January 2017



**BIBLE
SOCIETY**

Keswick in Devon

Equipping Christians for today's world

Join us in All Saints' Church Sidmouth

27th February – 3rd March

for stimulating Bible teaching, sung worship and warm fellowship

'LIVING WISDOM – PUTTING GOD'S TRUTH INTO ACTION'



Jonathan Lamb

will teach from PSALMS

Monday at 7.45pm

Tuesday – Thursday at 10.45am

**Tuesday – Thursday 7.45pm teaching from the Letter of James
from other speakers**

Friday morning Seminars

Considering up to the minute social issues

Friday Night Special at 7.30pm

**Jonathan
Veira**

opera singer, writer and raconteur



Full information at www.keswickindevon.org.uk
or contact Carole Hawkins tel: 01395 515674
email: keswickindevon@talktalk.net

GOOD FRIDAY WALK OF WITNESS - 14th April 2017

Christians Together across Exeter (CTaX) are seeking your support and participation in this year's Walk of Witness. The dramatised scenes and walk through the city centre have become a highlight for evangelistic witness and a focus of unity among Christians, as we remember all that Christ achieved through dying on the cross.

For the Walk of Witness 2017 they are asking people to volunteer as:

- Actors – they will need a strong cast of around twenty actors plus more who are willing to act as part of the crowd. A casting workshop for all actors will be held at Pinhoe Road Baptist Church on Tuesday 17 January at 7.30pm.
- Assistant Stage Managers – if you are practically minded and want to work behind the scenes there may be any number of small but significant tasks to do keep the performance running smoothly
- Easter egg engagers – engagers are volunteers who will hand out leaflets and gifts and engage passers-by in conversation about the meaning of Good Friday and Easter. They are looking for a church who is willing to co-ordinate this aspect.
- Hot cross buns: slicers, spreaders and servers – they need a small team (around ten people) to prepare hot cross buns and another to serve them. Again it would be great if a church could take on the role of co-ordinating one (or both) of these teams.

If you or a group in the Church are willing to help in any of these ways, please contact Adrian Jackson: 01392 494637 or adrianmjackson@supanet.com.

Church Council Meeting

Please note - the next Church Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 21 February at 7.30pm in the Church.

Anyone is welcome to attend and join in the discussions, although only Church Council Members are able to vote on any decisions..

Please put the date in your diary.

Alison Howell

ACT OF FAITH

This takes place on 18th February 2017 at The Salvation Army, Friars Gate, Exeter EX2 4AZ. The programme is below:

6.30pm Cafe and live music lounge

7.00pm An Act of Faith (performance approx 40-50 mins)

7.40pm More refreshments and live music followed by question and answer session with Sarah Grace. Open to anyone.

TICKETS £5 including refreshments.. tea, coffee and cake!

To order tickets email andrewcutler@hotmail.co.uk or call 07964 752585

An Act of Faith – Seriously Seeing The Funny Side. One School Desk. One Character. One Act.

From simple observations and everyday occurrences, to the more challenging and perplexing experiences, our character has learnt many lessons but still has unanswered questions. Sharing this story of ‘An Act of Faith’ gives people the opportunity to ask and consider their own questions, and hopefully inspire them to decide ‘What next?’

The show is written with honesty, humour, and a touch of vulnerability. It is hoped that together, in the company of friends, the audience will experience ‘An Act of Faith’, and seek courage and strength to take their own step of faith.

Sleep Easy 2017 - March 4 @ 7:00 pm - March 5 @ 7:00 am

Last year, a young person was made homeless every hour in England and hundreds of young people spent at least one night on the streets. Take part in Sleep Easy 2017 and make a lifetime of difference for young people facing homelessness this year.

The Challenge? Get sponsored to spend the night sleeping rough

Why? To raise awareness of youth homelessness and essential funds for YMCA Exeter’s ongoing work

The Goal? 300 people raising £150 each – that’s a total of £45,000!

Registration fee – £10 (£1.21 admin fee when booking through Eventbrite)

To book your place at Sleep Easy 2017 go to

<http://www.ymcaexeter.org.uk/event/sleepeasy> Alternatively ring our Events

Team on 01392 410530 to sign up over the phone, email

hilary.bush@ymcaexeter.org.uk or download the paper sign up form and return to us at the address enclosed.

Women's World Day of Prayer

This takes place on Friday 3rd March 2017, 10.30 am in Exeter Cathedral and will be led by Rev Victoria Thurtell & Rev Dame Sarah Mulhally - Bishop of Crediton

"As o'er each continent and island the dawn brings on another day" You'll probably recognise the hymn I'm quoting from, and a great favourite of mine particularly when it's sung at the end of the Women's World Day of Prayer. I always imagine this 24 hours of worship encircling the earth, starting in the far East 12 hours before I am at Exeter's Service, and carrying on another 12 hours before the day ends in the far West! Every year on the first Friday in March all over the world Services are being held, and this year's theme is "Am I Being Unfair to You?" selected by The Philippines, a group of islands near the equator and much affected by the storms and uncertainty of their weather brought by climate change.

Women and men from all over Exeter gather at either a morning or evening Service – so do put it in your diary now for the Women's World Day of Prayer. The Evening Service will be at St Thomas MC at 7.30 p.m.

Margretta Bowstead

Themed Preaching 2017

The Sermon on the Mount Matthew Chapters 5, 6 and 7 The King's Community

This series continues into February and March. It will be an illuminating and challenging series. Don't dare to miss even one of these!!

Jan 22	Secrets of Happiness	Matt 5 v1-12	Rev Alan Rothwell
Jan 29	Look Within	Matt 5 v13-36	Rev Bruce Sawyer
Feb 12	Relationship Issues	Matt 5 v31-48	Rev John Wiltshire (S)
Feb 19	A Pure Conscience	Matt 6 vv1-18	Monika Noronha
Feb 26	Overcoming Worry	Matt 6 vv19-34	Rev Bruce Sawyer
Mar 12	Of Sawdust and Planks	Matt 7 vv1-6	Rev Dr David Coffey
Mar 19	Finding Heaven	Matt 7 vv7-20	Rev Graham Shaw (S)
Mar 26	Sure Foundations	Matt 7 vv21-29	Rev Bruce Sawyer



Star Bakers Indeed!

A huge 'Thank you!' to those of you who baked gifts of star biscuits for our local community. Due to your generosity we were able to bless the staff at the following 8 institutions/businesses:

Woodwater Academy

Lidl

Well Pharmacy

Wonford Community and Learning Centre

Wonford Sports Centre

Chestnut Children's Centre

Choys Chip Shop

and

Wynstream School.

Bruce and I simply visited the above establishments and dropped off the gifts [bags of biscuits]. We assured them of our care, concern and prayers. The gifts were warmly welcomed by the reception staff and we wished everyone a Happy Christmas.

Why?

We are keen to be good neighbours in our community, to offer friendship and an open door within the community. A small gesture, yes. We found ourselves building fresh contacts and strengthening slightly more established ones.

STAR BAKERS, you made it possible! THANK YOU!

Bruce and Monika

Talk on the Persecuted Church Sunday 19 February 2017 at 6.30pm

The title of this talk will be "Realities of the Persecuted Church – Why Persecution?" and will be given by Peter B. There will be an opportunity to ask questions. There will be a display of information about Open Doors.



Open Doors

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide



@ 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 February

**Choose My (God's) instruction instead of silver,
knowledge rather than choice gold,
for wisdom is more precious than rubies,
and nothing you desire can compare with her.**

(Proverbs 8:10-11 NIV)

Week beginning Sunday 5th

Please pray we will seek God's wisdom in all our decisions, asking Him how best we can protect and conserve all that He has created in our world. Pray also that God will grant us wisdom in our spiritual lives, that we might walk more closely with Him in a loving and loved relationship.

Week beginning Sunday 12th

Today is Racial Justice Sunday. Please pray for an end to misunderstanding, racism and injustice, thanking God for human diversity and that all peoples are equally loved by Him; pray we will love with that same love.

Thank God for the Themed Preaching series 'The Sermon on the Mount', and for those who open up for us each week the heart of Jesus' teaching.

Week beginning Sunday 19th - The Persecuted Church

Please pray for Café Church and Peter B who will speak about the work of 'Open Doors' within the Persecuted Church.

Also ask God to prosper and protect the work of 'Release', 'Amnesty', 'Barnabas Trust' and others who highlight the injustices and plight of these brave Christians who suffer imprisonment, torture and even death for their faith.

Week beginning Sunday 26th - Messy Church

Please pray that God will continue to bless and prosper Messy Church and all who come to it.

Pray also for our Pastoral Visitors who will be rededicated at this morning's service and thank God for His gifting to them.

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

News from the Methodist Church

A Christmas message from the President and Vice-President of the Conference

In their Christmas message Roger Walton and Rachel Lampard speak about the Nativity, Syria and unpromising situations.

They offer a challenge to the Church, saying:

“Our faith surely prompts us not to turn away purely because any situation looks unpromising. This doesn't mean facing it with blind and passive optimism. Instead we have a hope which is grounded in the foolishness of God, which is wiser and stronger than wisdom and strength of the world. And God is at work in our world, and invites us to join in. As the theologian Ken Leech said: ‘hope isn't a state of mind; it's a piece of work’. In the unpromising situations in our world, where is God inviting us to join in? Where is God asking us to see the treasure that is hidden within the clay jars? Where is God asking us, not to be optimistic, but rather to be hopeful?”

Their full message can be found on the Methodist Church website.

April Events at Wesley House Cambridge

Anticipating Easter: April 10-12 2017

The Wesley House Cambridge Easter School offers a unique opportunity for those who preach or lead worship to join leading academics in Cambridge and spend time reflecting, learning and developing their gifts. Held in a devotional atmosphere it gives participants the chance to deepen their own spiritual journey.

The course includes:

- in-depth teaching
- seminar time with keynote speakers
- practical workshops on skills for leading worship
- morning and evening prayers
- free time to explore Cambridge.

For further information and registration see <http://www.wesley.cam.ac.uk/admissions/easterschool/>

April Seminars

Wesley House has announced two seminars being hosted in Cambridge in April 2017 as part of the celebrations to mark the commissioning of the College's new buildings.

On Monday 24 April the Methodist Studies Seminars, presented by a partnership of six UK theological colleges, will be on Methodism and the legacy of the Reformation. And on Tuesday 25 April the Methodist Church's Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network holds its annual Research Conference.

Both seminars are open to all and places can be booked at <http://www.wesley.cam.ac.uk/admissions/easterschool/>

Youth President Designate Announced

Michael Pryke, from Stamford in Lincolnshire, has been announced as the Methodist Youth President Designate.

He was elected at last month's 3Generate event for young Methodists.

Michael is keen for young people to participate in the life of the church, taking up roles that suit their gifts and to develop new styles of worship.

"I'm deeply honoured to have been chosen to take up this role and I'd like to thank all the people who helped and supported me with the election," said Michael. "Young people need to be a voice of change. We are not just what is next, we are now and our voice counts."

Michael will begin his role next summer, taking over from Tim Annan in September 2017.

Dates For Your Diary

February 2017

Sun 5th

From 9.30am to 3pm Ludwell Valley Tree Planting and Reflection **

10.00 a.m. Karenza Cordery - All Age Worship

6.30 p.m. Rev Jonathan Froggatt - Sacrament Service

Wed 8th

7.30 p.m. Home Group meets at 20 Whipton Lane **

Fri 10th

7.30 p.m. 'Bo-Peep & The Mystery of the Lost Sheep' pantomime at The Mint MC. **Also on Sat 11th ****

Sun 12th

10.00 a.m. Rev John Wiltshire - Themed Preaching with Sacrament **

6.30 p.m. Monika Noronha - Prayer & Praise

Sat 18th

8.30 a.m. Monthly Prayers & Coffee **

6.30 p.m. 'Act of Faith' at The Salvation Army, Friars Gate **

Sun 19th

10.00 a.m. Monika Noronha - Themed Preaching **

6.30 p.m. Café Church with Peter B **

Tue 21st

10.00 a.m. Roundabout Cafe (until 12pm)

7.30 p.m. Church Council Meets

Wed 22nd

7.30 p.m. Home Group meets at 20 Whipton Lane **

Thu 23rd

2.00 p.m. Monthly Bible Study in the Lounge

Sun 26th

10.00 a.m. Rev Bruce Sawyer - Themed Preaching and Re-Dedication of Pastoral Visitors **

4.00 p.m. **Messy Church**

6.30 p.m. Rev Brian Hadfield - Circuit United Service at Sidmouth MC

Keswick in Devon - 27th February to 3rd March 2017 **

March 2017

Fri 3rd

10.30 a.m. Women's World Day of Prayer Service at Exeter Cathedral **

7.30 p.m. Women's World Day of Prayer Service at St Thomas MC **

**** 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 March 2017 Newsletter will be Sunday 12th February 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