

Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

July 2020
(No: 490)
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,

I once slept through an earthquake. I was in Durham at the time, and the next morning, all the talk was of the tremor during the night. I, of course, had managed to sleep right through it. So there you have it, I can claim to have slept through an earthquake, which is not something everyone can boast of. Earthquakes of a much more serious nature were a very real threat to the inhabitants of Philadelphia and they had suffered a particularly bad one fifty or so years before this letter. This earthquake had destroyed most of the city and the Emperor had to step in to provide funds to rebuild it. Dangerous though the place may have been, there was nonetheless a thriving church and in this letter, it receives a ringing commendation from Jesus. Because of the city's dangerous situation, buildings would have been seen as something vulnerable, not immortal memorials to man's glory. Here though, Jesus promises that, as a reward for their faithfulness, the Philadelphian Christians will be made 'pillars in the temple of my God'. Pillars in a temple not vulnerable to earthquakes, or anything else, not made of stone which corrodes and cracks or can disappear into a crevice in the earth. Imagine the promise of a purpose and identity that was indestructible, in which you could find complete security and which could never be snatched from you. That's what the Philadelphians are promised, and it's because of their faithfulness. That's what we are promised too.

There's no indication that the Philadelphians are especially flashy or that they are doing anything remarkable. Jesus notes that they 'have but little power, and yet have kept my word and have not denied my name'. It's not success that Jesus seeks, but faithfulness, though in remaining faithful of course, the Philadelphians succeed. Through faithful discipleship, they find their way to an enduring Temple that is impervious to tectonic movements, or any of the other things which make human life vulnerable. Because earthquakes are not all they have to worry about. There are also those who oppose their message to contend with, those who seem to be doing what they can to prevent the Church from spreading the gospel. They are referred to as a 'Synagogue of satan'. This part of the letter is not a piece of anti-semitism. This is not so much a clash between two religious or racial groups, as it is about the question of who represents the true people of God. Can these upstart Christians, with their talk of Jesus, this new messiah, still claim to be part of the long story of God's people. This letter reminds them that proclaiming Jesus as Lord does not make them rebels or bad Jews. It makes them faithful witnesses to what God has done amongst

them, and whatever they do, they must keep being faithful witnesses and not be shamed into keeping quiet. The rewards for doing so will be greater than anything they can conceive. I love this letter, because it is a bracing, heartening commendation of what is at the heart of Christian discipleship – faithfulness. We live in a world which tells us so often to value what we can measure and quantify or put a price on. God's values are very different. The love and devotion which keep a believer on the path of discipleship and fill them with a desire to see others join too are what God desires to see above all.

With every blessing
Ben Haslam

Wonford Methodist Church Open for Prayer

Wonford church leaders have decided that, following the recent government announcement, we will be opening the church for **PERSONAL PRAYER** as follows:

Tuesday July 7th	10am to 12 noon
Friday July 10th	6.30pm to 8.00pm

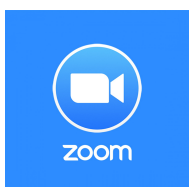


and similarly each week until further notice

Personal silent prayer only and strict social distancing will apply

Wonford Church Anniversary Service

This will take place on Sunday July 12th at 10am. The speaker will be Rev David Hull (Bristol).



Due to the present circumstances this will be a Zoom service. David has kindly agreed to put together a service to be delivered on line for us.



Log-in details to follow. Grateful thanks, David

The usual lunchtime picnic at Exmouth will not take place but we hope to hold small picnics in members' gardens. **Volunteer hosts needed.**

Church Offerings

The last occasion when we had a church service was the 15th March and if we do not resume worship until the first Sunday in September 24 weeks will have passed without there being any weekly offering. Our solar cells have been doing a good job recently and have not been affected by the lockdown and the Circuit has waived one of our quarterly assessments, so our outgoings are less.

The Methodist financial year ends on 31st August 2020 and I will have to prepare the church accounts by then. Several people have asked me what to do about their weekly collection.

We receive most of our income from our offerings so a drop in offerings makes a big difference to our financial situation. So far our offerings are over £1,100 lower than last year due to there being no services (up to the end of May 2020).

Several of our members contribute their offering by standing order, bank transfer or use internet banking and their income has continued which is wonderful. Some have joined this way of giving during lockdown – thank you very much to all of you.

If you can, please could you consider continuing to make your offering to the work of our church until we meet once more.

Here are some ideas for ways to contribute

- You can credit the church bank account directly. Please contact me and I will give you the details
- You can send me a cheque (payable to Wonford Methodist Church). Please include a note with your name or your envelope number if you are a member of the envelope scheme.
- You can even put cash in an envelope and post it through my door.
- Alternatively, put money aside each week and put it in the offering when you are next in church.

Please contact me if you need further help.

I have arranged to count the money in mid July and mid August and will then bank the money I have received.

At church, after the offering is taken it is dedicated. As this is not possible, I have written below the prayer from the Pentecost on line service from the Mint with my thanks to Stephen Lea.

O Lord we thank you for all your gifts to us and especially on this day we thank you for the gift of your Spirit – your presence in our hearts. We ask you to receive and bless the gifts we seek to give to you, our money, our service, our lives and we ask that you will bless them to the work of your Kingdom.

Amen

David Westcott
Church Treasurer

Shredding Sensitive Documents

During lockdown I have gone through the church accounts dating back 30 years or so and discarded documents that are no longer needed. I have purchased sacks for secure shredding by a local firm and have some space left.

If you have any sensitive church documents you wish to dispose of please contact me before I return the sacks for shredding at the end of July.

David Westcott

The Earth is the Lord's – Methodist Prayer Handbook 2020-21

As far as I know this annual booklet will be published as usual; and the title really pleases me, as one of our Church Green Team members. It contains a wide range of information over a double page for each day of the month, about the Methodist Church in this country and worldwide, as well as lovely photos and varied and helpful prayers.

It runs from September 2020 to August 2021, and will cost about £4 whether ordinary or large print. Just tell me what you'd like. I need to know before 12th July, when my order goes in; and I get delivery mid-August, when I'll hope to hand them out and collect the money! This time might be a bit different; and, perhaps, you could phone (01392 437329) or email (mrw7bowstead@yahoo.co.uk) to tell me your order? I recommend it wholeheartedly, as it has many uses; and this is the time to tell me if you'd like a copy order one now!

Margretta Bowstead

Ludwell Valley

During 'lockdown' we have all been staying closer to home and appreciating what we have on our doorsteps – for me this is the wonderful Ludwell Valley Park with its incredible views. On one of our permitted walks we stopped to watch a tractor turning over the lovely red soil and just a few minutes from home!



In 2019 Devon Wildlife Trust took over the management of six of Exeter's Valley Parks including Ludwell Valley and have been evaluating them. Ludwell Valley meadows are mainly grasses and they lack 'botanical richness' so Devon Wildlife Trust applied to Viridor for a grant to improve biodiversity (which the Green Team wrote letters of support for).

This application was successful so later this year work will begin to improve the abundance and diversity of wildflowers. These will include knapweed, bird's foot trefoil, oxeye daisy, meadowsweet, meadow vetchling and fleabane, which will provide much improved food sources for bees and other pollinating insects and will look good too!

In the future there will be volunteer work parties to prepare ground and plant wildflowers and also to help with hedge laying and planting of hedge row trees.

Devon Wildlife Trust are working closely with the community group Ludwell Life who are creating a community orchard in one of the top fields and organise litter picks along the Panny Path.

Once we are back in Church keep an eye on the Green Team noticeboard for Ludwell Valley volunteer opportunities.

Helen Moore

Wonford Green Team

Burnthouse Lane Squilometre

Interwoven Productions (who are behind the Heavitree Squilometre) are setting up a Burnthouse Lane Squilometre to discover and celebrate the history of 'The Lane'. They are looking for a Burnthouse Lane 'Champion' – this is an unpaid position but would involve lots of training and support. The project is initially focussing on Milton Road. See www.burnthouselanesquilometre.org for more information.



Prayer Focus for July

Prayer - Our Strongest Weapon - Pray Without Ceasing

I encourage you all this month to continue to pray as before around the Coronavirus pandemic. Give thanks for all who have survived. As you pray along the lines of last month may I also encourage you to pray for those who are at the end of life but not with the virus. We have all been prevented from visiting our loved ones in hospitals, care homes or indeed in their own home if it's away from us. Also remember those who those who lost a loved one suddenly, e.g. in an accident.

Don't forget the areas of the world that are or have been at war. So many refugees living in ghettos where if the virus were to hit the area could be wiped out.

We have all seen the image of George Floyd, killed by police officers in America and the protests that have gone on around the world since. We have seen statues of many who made their fortune from the slave trade. There is much to pray for from this. Education - to teach of not just the good but also of the evil, loss of freedom, cruelty and death, that were caused by these men like Colston, Rhodes and others. We also need to pray for those who have been trafficked especially for the sex trade even here in the UK. All over the world children have been bought or abducted to work in sweat shops to produce clothing, carpets and other goods. We also need to pray that the Coronavirus doesn't lead to a second wave of infection.

Continue to pray for the persecuted church, political prisoners where ever they are.

Keep safe everyone and 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)

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

Answers to Last Months Bible Crossword



The deadline for items for the August 2020 Newsletter will be Sunday 12th July 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