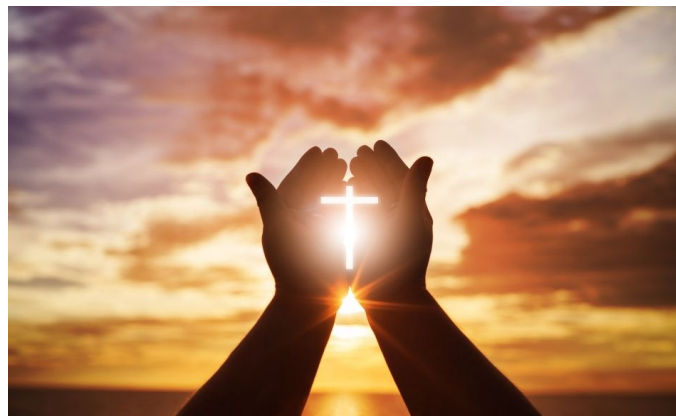


Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

July 2021
(No: 501)



Minister: Rev Ben Haslam (01392 256716)



Wonford is a
Fairtrade church

The **Methodist Church** 

www.wonfordmethodistchurch.org.uk

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A Message From The Minister

Dear Friends,

I heard a saying recently which caught my attention and is still reverberating around my head. It was this: “Don’t pray that God will bless what you are doing. Pray instead to be a part of what God is blessing”. Such apt words for the present time, a time when the country is cautiously edging its way towards the lifting of all restrictions and we in the Church look forward to being able to sing again! Many are asking whether churches should just go back to being exactly what they were before the pandemic, or whether this might be an opportunity to do things differently. I have a couple of thoughts on this. Firstly, there are risks involved in seizing this opportunity to ‘do things differently’. We can simply end up pursuing our own agenda, or a passing fad, rather than genuinely seeking where God might be leading us. This leads me to my second thought, which in turn brings us back to the quote I started with. perhaps this is a good time to make a priority of what was lacking in the life of the Church generally, namely a genuine and radical seeking after God, inviting the Holy Spirit to lead us forward whilst placing our gifts and graces at His disposal.

We can all too easily treat God like a member of the Royal Family, inviting Him to ‘cut the ribbon’ on our own projects and ideas. In other words, we decide what we are going to do, then we ask God to bless it. What if we instead made spiritual discernment an integral part of our life together, bringing our church constantly before God, with the words ‘Thy will be done’ always at the forefront of our minds, our hearts, and our lips? Just imagine what could happen if more and more churches took up this challenge!

**With every blessing
Ben Haslam**



Ben's Sabbatical

Rev Ben Haslam will be on sabbatical during the months of July and August. During this time Rev Alan Rothwell has agreed to assist with all pastoral matters.

'Live Streaming' of Sunday Morning Worship Update

Paul Violet has purchased and installed additional equipment to improve the 'live streaming' of services. This will improve the sound and picture quality of what we can offer online.

One of the big changes, to improve both sound and picture quality' is the move from Zoom to YouTube to broadcast the services live. We now have a YouTube channel where our live services and recordings of previous services can be viewed. Go to www.youtube.com on a computer, tablet or phone and search for 'Wonford Methodist Church'. You will find links to the next live service and previous services. We are continuing to broadcast on Zoom at the same time though our Facebook offering is currently on hold. People can also join on Zoom (normal joining instructions) to sing the last hymn outside each Sunday morning.

Zoom Bible Studies

Deacon Becky Lovatt is continuing to lead Zoom Bible Studies fortnightly on Thursday evenings at 7.15pm, 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. **The dates in July are the 8th and 22nd.** You will need to register with Becky for the Zoom-link from her - deaconbecky@outlook.com

"A Place for All" – Methodist Prayer Handbook 2021-22

As far as I know this annual booklet will be published as usual. 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. Those who had this year's edition will recall on Day 24 a photo of our Ludwell Valley picnic, sent in by Monika Noronha! I don't know if she has offered a photo this year. It runs from September 2021 to August 2022, and will cost maybe £4.50 whether ordinary or large print. Just tell me what you'd like. **I need to know before 9th July, when my order goes in; and I get delivery mid-August, when I'll hope to hand them out and collect the money then!** This time might be a bit different; and, perhaps, you could phone (01392 437329) or email to tell me your order mrw7bowstead@yahoo.co.uk. 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

WMC Green Team

Over the years we have heard more and more about the negative impact we are having on God's incredible creation – pollution, loss of habitat leading to extinction of plant and animal species, depletion of natural resources. Our actions are leading to climate change with a resulting increase in sea temperature, melting of glaciers and sea level rising.



Back in April 2017 a few of us began to consider these issues and discuss what the Church could do to improve our stewardship of God's wonderful world.

We looked at the A Rocha Eco-Church scheme and worked towards the Bronze Award which was achieved and now hangs at the back of the Chapel.

The recent pandemic has given us an opportunity to assess what we have done so far and what we want to focus on going forward. **To help us we would be very grateful if you could answer the survey enclosed as a loose leaf insert with this edition of Contact.** There is a box in the Church for you to return the paper versions.

Alternative ways of completing the survey:

- 1) For those who receive the Contact newsletter electronically you should have also received a Word version for the survey. Complete this and email back to Alison Howell (email address on the Word document)
- 2) An online version of the survey can be reached at <https://forms.office.com/r/hQAWhjNFdg>

Thank you from the Green Team

Alison Hobbs, Alison Howell, Helen Moore, Margretta Bowstead, Martin Lloyd and Sue Keatt

New members of the Green Team would be very welcome!

Please let us know if you have any suggestions of ways that the Church could be more environmentally friendly.....

What areas would you like the Green Team to focus on for the next 12 months?

- Taking action/making changes
- Providing information through articles/displays
- Holding events/inviting speakers
- Prayer

The Green Team would like to invite you to join us in this prayer:

Creator God,

We thank you for the beauty, variety and sheer wonder of your world.

We thank you for all that it gives to us, and we pray that we, in return, will do all that we can to be good stewards of your creation.

May gratitude grow within us, and may that gratitude lead to lives lived faithfully, justly and responsibly, as we care for the world which has given so much to us,

In Jesus name, Amen.



New President of the Methodist Conference Elected

The Revd Sonia Hicks has been elected and inducted as President of the Methodist Conference. The induction took place on Saturday 26 June at the National Conference Centre, Birmingham, during the Methodist Conference.



Sonia Hicks, who comes from a long line of Methodists as far back as her great-grandfather who was a Local Preacher in Jamaica, has served as a Circuit Superintendent in three connexions: Britain, the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and Americas and the Methodist Church in Ireland (MCI). She is currently Superintendent Minister in Wembley, north London.

In her **Conference address** Rev Hicks focused on her theme for the year, “God’s Table: An Invitation for All”, reflecting on the racism and marginalisation she and her family have experienced and how the Church can respond to injustice and division in society today. She recalled the experience of her Great Aunt Lize, who had arrived from Jamaica with her Methodist membership card only to be rejected from her local Methodist Church because she was black. Sonia and her family eventually found a Methodist home at Walworth Methodist Church in South London.

Sonia, who is the first black woman to be elected as President of the Methodist Conference, speaking about her theme, said:

“In a world where people are excluded because of their ethnic background, their sexual orientation, their gender or simply because, like me, they were brought up on a council estate, I believe that we are called to show God’s love for all people. It is a calling that Christian people have always struggled with, but we can and should be better at making God’s love a reality in the British Methodist Church, overcoming the systemic discrimination that exists.”

Sonia’s commitment to oppose all forms of injustice began when she was a member of the Youth Exchange to Zimbabwe. She has since been Convenor of the World Relief and Development Committee for MCI, and has served as a Trustee for both All We Can and Christian Aid Ireland.

Prayer Focus for July

Prayer - Our Strongest Weapon - Pray Without Ceasing

During the past couple of weeks, Alan and I have had the privilege of visiting our children and grandchildren in the north. It has made a great difference to my mental health seeing some of them for the first time since August 31st 2019. This has made me think of those who have lost loved ones during the pandemic, not just with the virus but all deaths. Some, especially older folk may not have seen their loved ones for months before they died and face grief and loss alone. There may be many reasons why they are so lonely but we need to pray for them. Pray that the right facilities will be found to help the lonely folk.

It also made me think of those in prisons for charges that never happened. Many are tortured for their faith. They too will be missing out on family life separated by thousands of miles from family and friends. Continue to pray for them.

Pray for our government that they make the right decision when to end restrictions. Pray for the teams giving the vaccines and pray for all NHS workers who are so exhausted after working all hours to save as many lives as possible.

Continue to pray for one another and the work at Wonford. Keep safe and well everyone and enjoy the lovely weather.

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 July

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

4th	10.00 am	Dr Jon Curtis - All Age Worship
11th	10.00 am	Rev Dave Martin - Church Anniversary (see below)
	6.30 pm	Rev Dave Martin - Communion Service
18th	10.00 am	Stephen Lawson
25th	10.00 am	Rev Terry Spencer - Communion Service

Church Anniversary Services (11th July 2021)

This year we welcome Rev Dave Martin from Plymouth Central Hall to lead both our morning and evening services.

At 1pm we will be having a picnic at Exmouth (behind the beach on the grassy area) where Rev Dave Martin will hold a short Bible Study.

August / September 2021 Newsletter

This will be the normal 'double issue'. Please can you get items to me by Sunday 11th July at the latest. (I break up from school on the 16th and it will be difficult to print paper copies).

I would appreciate a few more contributions each month. A few lockdown stories, events you have attended, photos from present and past, etc. Ideally these should be emailed to me though I can receive paper copies on a Sunday morning.

Andrew

The deadline for items for the August/September 2021 Newsletter will be Sunday 11th July 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