

A Message From The Minister

Dear Friends,

I write this the day after I've finally seen snow in Exeter! After 3 ½ years of waiting it was wonderful to watch the flakes tumbling down – and disappointing that they didn't settle! I know that many find it an inconvenience, that it can be a hindrance to some people's livelihoods and that it can be treacherous and dangerous, but I love snow. I love the sound of it crunching underfoot and the muffled silence of a snowscape. I love the mesmerising wonder as snowflakes fall and the beauty of fresh snowfall. I love to be out in the snow, playing, building snowmen, and most of all walking in it. Whether it is a myth or not, I can well understand the idea that Eskimos might have dozens of words for snow – something with which they are very familiar, yet at the same time has many different aspects and characteristics.

This got me thinking – there are many names for God, or ways of describing God, in the Christian tradition. In some ways this reflects the infinite depths of God's nature and being as we attempt to articulate all that God is, and has done. Yet often we seem to only use a handful (either in personal prayer or public worship) – Father, Son, Lord, Holy Spirit. God is our Father, our Lord, the Holy Spirit, and there's nothing wrong with these names, but what about some of these other names:

Creator, Prince of Peace, Emmanuel (God with us), Redeemer, Lamb of God, Lion of Judah, Sustainer, Counsellor, Rock, Shield, Yahweh (I am who I am / I will be who I will be), Alpha and Omega (Beginning and End), Refuge, The Potter, Saviour, Shepherd, Comforter. These names reveal yet more of who God is.

I remember at college being challenged to pray to God using a name that I didn't often use. At first this felt uncomfortable and something of a struggle, but over time I found myself relating to God in new ways, and appreciating aspects of God's nature that perhaps I was less familiar with or overlooked, and certainly felt it helped my relationship with God to grow. Perhaps this is something you could try?

Why not pick one of the names above and spend Lent using it to address God when you pray and see how your understanding of God develops (and even if it feels uncomfortable to begin with, stick with it!)? Or you could try simply using a characteristic of God as a way of naming God, e.g. Holy God, Loving God, Compassionate God, Merciful God, God of Justice.

**With every blessing,
Bruce**

Dates For March

Coffee

5th Ann & John
12th Lisa & Sarah
19th Eileen & Melanie
26th Paul H & Paul D



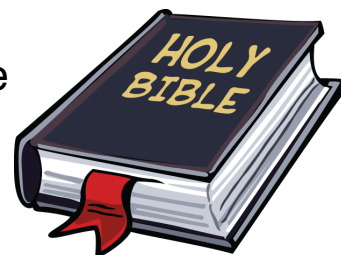
Flowers

5th Karen
12th Eileen
19th Lisa
26th Mothering Sunday - 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.



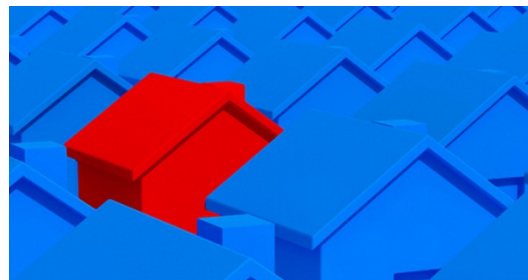
16th 2.00 p.m. Bible Study in the lounge.

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 continuing 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.

7th 7.30pm 20 Whipton Lane

21st 7.30pm 20 Whipton Lane



Membership Course - STARTING VERY SOON

**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.

News From The January 2017 Circuit Meeting

At the circuit meeting on 19th January, the superintendent Rev'd Steve Santry presented proposals for the possible restructuring of the circuit from September 2018. He also presented a number of areas for reflection about how ministry (in the fullest sense, i.e. not just those who are ordained) might be developed. A summary of the presentation is given below:

2018 & BEYOND - AREAS OF EXPLORATION

Reasons why restructuring the circuit is necessary:

1. It was Agreed at a previous circuit meeting to support the budget deficit until 2018 by using circuit reserves, on the understanding that a sustainable solution would be found after that date.
2. The Number of ordained staff available in the Connexion has greatly reduced and there are insufficient to maintain existing levels.
3. Ministry has evolved over recent years, and having the one "professional" is not true to our Methodist heritage of the ministry of all believers, nor is it the most constructive model moving forward.

Proposed structure of circuit from September 2018 based on a worst case

scenario of 7 ministers (6 presbyters & 1 deacon). Circuit arranged in 6 sectors as follows [areas underlined represent possible areas of diaconal work]:

A – Superintendent & The Mint

B – Cheriton Fitzpaine, Exminster, Sidwell St. & Silverton [& Topsham]

C – Temple, Tower St., Withycombe & Littlemead

D – St. Thomas (& Alphington), Tedburn St. Mary, Whiddon Down, Crockernwell & Crediton

E – Wonford, Honiton, Ottery St. Mary, Farway & Lympstone

F – Sidmouth (& Sidford), Seaton, Dalwood, Axminster & Colyton

University Chaplaincy & Cranbrook are further areas of work that also need to be considered.

DOING THE PLAN WELL

The idea of focusing local preachers into a specific church for a period of time was discussed at a recent Local Preacher meeting. Both preachers and churches will be approached asking if they would consider a partnership for a twelve month period. Minimum of 6 times a year and a maximum of 12 times a year. This will aid with continuity and in partnership with the minister may include theme preaching.

A PASTOR IN EVERY CHURCH

Nigel Collinson pursued this principle in his year of Presidency. It mimics something of our heritage but also where I believe the Spirit is moving. Sometimes as a result of doing the plan well a local preacher may evolve into a local pastor. On other occasions there may be another local person that it is appropriate to take on this role. This will not be appropriate in every church. Training and empowerment will be explored.

NUMBER OF CHURCHES

Steve talked about the need to avoid simply spreading ministerial staff ever thinner as a response to reduced numbers of ordained ministers. This may necessitate difficult decisions being made.

NUMBER OF ACTS OF WORSHIP

Around 90% of the acts of worship on the plan would be familiar to us all. Of the 10% that remains we have Breakfast Church, Cafe Church, Messy Church etc. It is within the 10% that we see growth and new people. Therefore we have a challenge over this period to allow our worship to be missional. Plan making isn't an easy task, but the skills that we have need to be used appropriately.

CENTRES OF FELLOWSHIP & CENTRES OF MISSION

Each church has been asked to consider where it might fit on the spectrum between a centre of fellowship and a centre of mission.

A centre of fellowship is a place of discipleship for its members and adherents. A fellowship that is strong and supportive through its pastoral work. It may have a variety of initiatives both spiritual and social to support people who attend and live out the Kingdom of God. Through its example it is a beacon of light to the community.

A centre of fellowship is likely to be energised by faith and emphasise:

- Worship and sacramental life;
- A desire to serve God and one another;
- Engaging with scripture;
- Helping people to grow in faith.

A centre of mission may well have many of the attributes above but its missional element requires it to be integrated with the community. It will have a whole life rather than a church life concern and display the following additional attributes:

- Deeply rooted in the local community;
- Passionate about justice and peace;
- Makes connections between faith and daily life;
- Responds to human need through loving service.

I wonder where you think Wonford fits on the spectrum between centre of fellowship and centre of mission? Where would you like Wonford Methodist Church to be?

By the time you read this, the presentation will have been discussed by Wonford Church Council but please do share any reflections or questions you have regarding this with myself or members of the Leadership Team [Monika Noronha, Dave Westcott, Paul Violet, Tudor Chinnah, Maggie Harmon, Rose Smith & Gary Lord].

The circuit meeting on 27th March will be making decisions regarding the future of the circuit – please do pray for the circuit and everyone who is a part of that meeting as together we seek to discern how God is leading us forward.

Bruce Sawyer

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 – there will be updates from the March circuit meeting (see article above about circuit restructuring) and 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].

At the start of the meeting we shall also elect representatives to the Church Council and people to serve as Church Stewards for the coming year. If you would like to nominate anyone for election, please give their name (with that person's consent) in writing/email to Rev Bruce Sawyer, or Alison Howell, by 26 March 2017.

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]

Roundabout Café

The meeting on Tuesday 21st March 2017 will include a 'Pictures of Devon' quiz and takes place from 10am to 12 noon.



The Marriage Sessions: **CONNECT**

Wonford Methodist Church

Thursday 30th March

7.30pm – 9.30pm



An opportunity to invest in, and enrich, your relationship. Explore:

- How to stay connected as a couple
- How to best understand and accept each other
- What it takes to communicate well

The Marriage Sessions is an evening for couples. It aims to create space for you and your partner to:

- Spend time together
- listen and talk to one another
- reflect on insights from real-life couples & relationship specialists
- Enjoy each other's company and a selection of desserts!

This is an evening just for the two of you – there is no group discussion or need to share anything with anyone other than your partner.

Attending the evening does not mean something is wrong in your relationship – all relationships can grow and be even healthier with care and attention.

There is no charge for the event and no need to book – simply come along!

For more information, please contact Rev'd Bruce Sawyer
(01392 256716 / bruce.sawyer@methodist.org.uk)

www.wonfordmethodistchurch.org.uk



This event is based on material provided by:

Women's World Day of Prayer - Friday 3rd March 2017

There is a Morning Service at 10.30 am in Exeter Cathedral, led by Rev Victoria Thurtell & Rev Dame Sarah Mulhally Bishop of Crediton, and an Evening Service at 7.30 pm at St Thomas Methodist Church.

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 the morning or evening Service.

Margretta Bowstead

Themed Preaching 2017

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

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

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

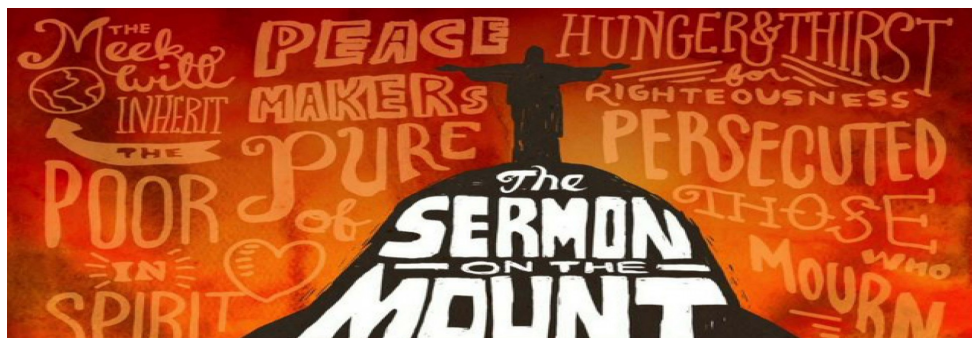


Table Top Sale

This is hosted by the 'TLC/Together Let's Communicate' Community Group in Wonford Methodist Church Hall from 1.30 – 3.30 p.m on Wednesday 29th March 2017. There will be Bric a Brac, Jumble and Craft Stalls. Tea or Coffee and Cake for £1.

All Welcome

Phoenix Suite and Sour!

The official opening of the Phoenix Suite on February 4th was a great success! Thank you to everyone who came along!

Unfortunately a week before this we discovered that the boiler was unsafe and had been condemned! We borrowed electric heaters so we could continue with the opening but this isn't possible on a daily basis so everything is on hold until we have a new boiler.

The aim is that the Phoenix Suite will be a safe, accessible, affordable and suitable venue for community-led provision. with a regular Community Café where residents can meet over a reasonably-priced drink. Also, since the Phoenix Youth Club closed there hasn't been any universal youth provision in Wonford. Youth art workshops were due to start in the Phoenix Suite and local young people were going to be consulted on what other provision they would like - drama, music/singing, sport or cooking. So the sooner we can get a replacement boiler the better!

Wonford Community and Learning Centre is a charity and though we do have some funding that was earmarked for furniture that we can use towards the boiler we need to fundraise for the shortfall. Please help if you can!

We are also looking for volunteers to help with the running of the Phoenix Suite particularly the Community Café. If you would like to know more please contact our Volunteer Co-ordinator Bernice Endacott at volunteer-wclc@outlook.com

Our aim is that the Phoenix Suite will have a positive impact on the whole community in particular helping our children and young people to get the best start in life.

Helen Moore

With my WCLC Trustee hat on!





@ 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 March

**Cast your cares on the Lord
and He will sustain (provide for, hold up, keep going, support) you.**
(Psalm 55:22 NIV)

Week beginning Sunday 5th

Please pray, in this second week of Fairtrade Fortnight, that God will continue to bless and prosper the work and the farmers represented by Fairtrade.

Thank God for the Exeter Food Bank to which our church (and many others) contribute, which does so much good work in providing for those who have difficulty in affording food for themselves or their families.

Week beginning Sunday 12th

Please pray that God will continue to sustain our church's outreach to the community through the creativity of 'Open the Book', Messy Church, Girls' Brigade, Mums and Toddlers, Roundabout Cafe and Men's Coffee and Games morning.

Pray also that He will enable our House Fellowships, Bible study and Prayer meetings to keep going.

Week beginning Sunday 19th

Please pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide and inspire those attending our Church Membership course, now in its third week, and also sustain Bruce as he leads them.

Week beginning Sunday 26th Messy Church

Please pray for wise and Godly decisions to be taken at a most important Circuit Meeting on Monday, where the outcome may affect some Churches in the Circuit. Pray for God to provide for His church, that all may grow in Him and reach out to the next generation and the communities in which we are placed.

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

Suspension of the “Dubs” Policy

You may have heard in the news this week that the government has announced the suspension of the “Dubs” policy (this was an amendment to legislation passed last year regarding refugees, that committed the government to a programme of resettling lone refugee children). I have today received two pieces of information which I want to make you aware of:

Firstly, please see below the press release today from the Churches Joint Public Issues Team (of which the Methodist Church is a part) denouncing this decision as devoid of ambition and showing a lack of creativity. It calls upon the government to adopt a policy that places the wellbeing of children above all other considerations.

Secondly, whilst it is important that the Methodist Church has issued a formal statement, there is the opportunity for each of us to add our voice. Exeter City of Sanctuary (to which Wonford Methodist Church has pledged support) has provided details of a petition organised by Citizens UK calling upon the government not to abandon the “Dubs” policy and to keep the policy of welcoming refugee children. Please can I ask you to prayerfully consider signing the petition, which can be found here:

[http://www.citizensuk.org/dubs_petition?
utm_campaign=dubs_launch&utm_medium=email&utm_source=citizens](http://www.citizensuk.org/dubs_petition?utm_campaign=dubs_launch&utm_medium=email&utm_source=citizens)

With every blessing,

Bruce

Gift Aid Update

A very big thank you to all those who gift aid their Church Offerings. We are again approaching the end of another tax year and I will be hoping to make our gift aid claim during April or May. If you have changed your address or name during the last year could you please let me know. This is because HMRC rules state that we must hold correct names and addresses before any gift aid claim is made. Thank you for your co-operation.

If you are a taxpayer and do not at present gift aid your Church Offering and would like to do so please have a chat with me! I do not need to know any of your personal financial details but can explain the gift aid scheme to you.

Once again a big thank you to those of you who do gift aid your Church Offerings, it does make a significant difference to the church finances.

Linda Clarke
Gift Aid Secretary.

News From The Methodist Church

Bishop Ough Issues Statement on Trump immigration order

Bishop Bruce R. Ough, president of the United Methodist Council of Bishops, issued a statement regarding President Trump's executive order on immigration at a press conference sponsored by the Minnesota Council of Churches. The event, held at Hennepin United Methodist Church, gathered faith leaders to discuss the topic of immigration. Bishop Ough participated in today's event in his role as resident bishop of the Dakotas-Minnesota Area of The United Methodist Church. The statement maintains The United Methodist Church's unity in standing with other faith traditions to denounce the order, as well as calling all to remember Jesus' words from Matthew 10:40: "Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me."



"I call upon the people of The United Methodist Church to see the face of Christ in the refugee," Bishop Ough said, "Say 'no' to the walling off of our country and our hearts and say 'yes' to their hope - our hope - for new life. Let us unite and work together to bring the soul of this country to a living birth!"

The full text is on the Methodist Church website.

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 April 2017 Newsletter will be Sunday 12th March 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