

Wonford Methodist Church

Contact Newsletter

May 2018

(No: 468)



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,

After a break for a couple of months, I'm returning to reflect on the rhythms of discipleship we're being encouraged to explore this year (though we could easily also make a case for rest being an essential rhythm of discipleship!). Having previously considered "giving thanks", "keeping silence" and "pray", we move this time to look at "Act".

After Easter, we spent the week at Spring Harvest. The theme this year was "Only the Brave: Determined Discipleship", based on the teaching of the book of James. James famously, and for some controversially, argued that 'faith without works is dead' (James 2: 17 & 26). James was not trying to suggest that we achieve salvation through the things we do (works), or that we don't need to place our trust (faith) in the love and grace shown to us by God in Jesus. Rather, James' point was more along the lines of the proverb which says that "the proof of the pudding is in the eating". An apple pie might look great, it might smell wonderful, but if when you eat it it tastes of pears, it's not really an apple pie. So too with faith; it's not simply a question of saying or believing 'the right thing', if faith is real it will characterise who we are, running through each part of us and lives, not just looking right from the outside. At Spring Harvest it was suggested that this teaching of James could be summed up by "Live It!"

When we look at the description of the early church from which we get these rhythms of discipleship (Acts 2: 42-47) we can clearly see these were a people who tried to Live It! The faith that they had in the risen Jesus had a profound impact on how they lived. They were willing to share and to give. They shaped their lives around doing those things that would help build and sustain their faith (in the temple, teaching, eating together), but they didn't just look in on themselves – they distributed money to all, as they had need. It's not surprising that we are told they had the goodwill of all people!

So how do you Live It? James passionately argues that it is as we see our faith put into action that we demonstrate it is real, is alive. In what ways do you put your faith into action? Part of the rhythm of our discipleship is to use opportunities to live out the things we say we believe (whether in everyday ways around the house, or in intentional acts of service within the church or community).

For faith to be alive, we must Live It!

With every blessing
Bruce

Dates For May

Coffee

6th Wayne & Tony
13th Fran & Pauline
20th TBA
27th TBA



Flowers

6th Karen
13th Margretta
20th Judith M (Granddaughter's Wedding)
27th Mandy



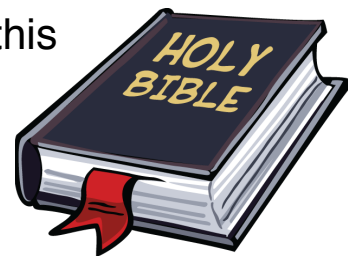
Minister's Monthly Bible Study Group

This group meets in the lounge at 2pm normally on the third Thursday each month. All are welcome. This month they are continuing to study Job.

17th 2.00 p.m. Bible Study in the lounge.

Home Group

This is the House Group that meets approximately fortnightly, and often hosted generously by Caroline Sawyer at the manse. Do look in the Diary Dates for exactly when we're meeting this month, and we'd love to have you come and join us anytime. In May they are continuing studying Paul's letter to the Ephesians, fortunately with a guide book to help us discuss the challenges there.



Monika Noronha

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

trypraying.

Our Calling

Our Calling, in the Methodist Church in Britain, is to:

*increase awareness of
God's presence and to
celebrate God's love*

*help people to grow and learn as
Christians through mutual
support and care*

*to be a good neighbour to
people in need and to challenge
injustice*

*make more followers of Jesus
Christ*

Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Acts 2: 46-47

Bible Month 2018

The Bible is; breathed by God; a light for the path at our feet; bread that nourishes us; a stream that waters our soul.

Throughout June the Methodist Church is encouraging members to adopt Bible Month and spend 30 days with the book of Jonah. It's an opportunity to plunge into the depths of the Bible, to immerse yourself in Scripture by focusing on a single Biblical book to help us read the whole Bible better and more deeply.

BIBLE 2018
MONTH
30 days with Jonah
— #BibleMonth —

Why Jonah? Jonah invites us to consider how God calls us to mission in the unlikeliest of places. It points to a God who is compassionate and loving to all, and challenges us to reflect this God in our mission.

At Wonford, we will be engaging in Bible Month in two ways. Firstly our preaching at Sunday morning services will focus on a different chapter from Jonah throughout June/early July:

3rd June – Jonah 1: Monika Noronha [All Age Service]
17th June – Jonah 2: Rev'd Alan Rothwell
24th June – Jonah 3: Rev'd Bruce Sawyer
8th July – Jonah 4: Rev'd Bruce Sawyer

Secondly, Bruce will be running a 4 week study group. This will meet in the lounge on Thursday evenings at 7.30pm (for about an hour). Each week will feature a DVD reflection from Jeff Lucas to get us thinking about the story of Jonah, followed by discussion.

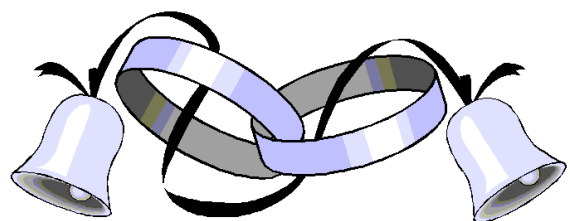
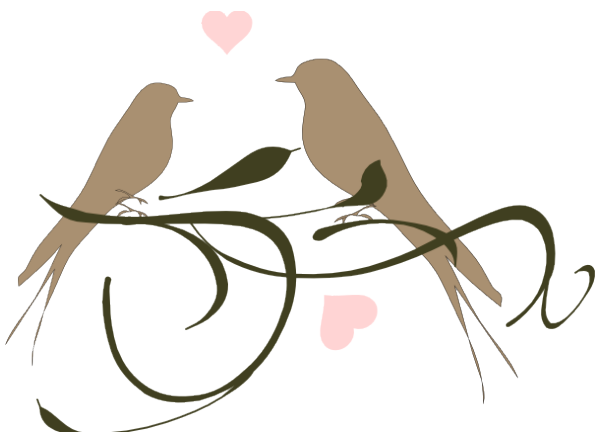
7th June – The Passionate God
21st June – Life After Failure
28th June – Partnering in the Mission of God
5th July – Trusting through Anger and Disappointment

The study group is open to all, but if you're not already part of one of our house groups, why not make a special effort to come and explore for yourself the benefit of being part of a small group to explore faith and nurture your discipleship?

Another Wedding!!

Samantha Lindsay & Kiefer Lee are getting married at the Church on May 19th at 3pm and welcome any of the Church family to join them on their special day.'

Judith and Michael



Community News

Community Litter Pick

Are you willing to give up a couple of hours to make a visible difference in this community?



The Girls' Brigade and the new Church Eco Group (Alison Hobbs, Alison Howell, Helen, Margretta and Sue Keats) are planning a litter pick on Wonford Playing Field at 5.45pm on Monday 25th June.

Please join us if you can! Thank you!

Wonford Community Day

This takes place on Saturday 7th July from 11am to 2pm at Wonford Community Centre and Wonford Playing Fields.

If you would like to run a stall/activity or know someone who would please contact wclcentre@outlook.com

It is free to have a stall and you can keep any money you make!

Helen Moore



Sunday 20th May 2018

4.00pm

ALL Welcome

Saying 'Thank you' ?

How do you thank all the people who have made Easter 2018 so special? I think of Bruce at the start of Holy Week on Palm Sunday with a challenging exploration in his sermon on the crowds that surrounded Jesus on that day. Then on Monday 26th our Girls' Brigade gave us a happy Celebration of their 50 years helping young girls in Wonford learn so much. Then the important Maundy Thursday Communion Service reminded us all of the servant Jesus in our midst.

But what were you doing on Good Friday at 8 a.m.?

Our wonderful Music Group were already in Exeter Cathedral setting up their sound system and getting in tune! So that, as I and many others walked into that superb sacred space I could hear them playing a selection of hymns. They did themselves proud throughout the Service – and I want to say 'Thank you' – it was all so very good.

And that's not all. In the sleety rain late that afternoon, and along very wet roads, our Wonford musicians were also at Silverton Methodist Church, and leading the singing again that evening for a smaller number than in the Cathedral – but just as good as before. And I shouldn't omit that they were playing again at our Easter Day Services too. The Good Friday Circuit Service at Silverton had a theme on "obligations/owing". I "owe" the warmest of thanks to Wonford Music Group for all they have given me this Easter: **THANK YOU!**

Margretta

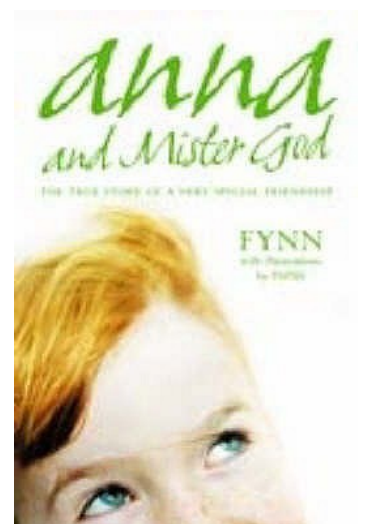
Book Review

Thank you for Andrew Simpson (a new contributor to Contact) for this book review.

'Anna and Mister God' by 'Fynn'

At first sight this appears to be a children's book, but it is anything but that. Although it was first published in 1964, the events it describes actually occurred during the mid-1930s, indicating the amount of time the author, Sydney George Hopkins, had to reflect upon the events it portrays and the implications towards his own life.

Some time in the mid-1930s Hopkins, a tall, well built, but clever character, was wandering late in the evening around the back streets of south London. He was interested in analytical chemistry and philosophy,



and spent much of his time wandering around trying to unravel in his mind the complexities of these subjects. He states in the text that he was 19 at the time, but the timeline related back to his birth-date suggests that he was actually younger, probably nearer 16.

As he wandered down a fog-bestrewn alley he suddenly came upon a little girl, sitting on a grating beneath a bakery shop window. The encounter was quite peculiar. He recalled:

'Looking back over thirty years I can now cope with those three hours, but at the time I was on the verge of being destroyed. That November night was pure hell; my guts tied themselves into all manner of complicated knots.

'Perhaps even then something of her angelic nature caught hold of me. I am quite prepared to believe that I had been bewitched from the beginning.'

There seems to be some question over whether the events Hopkins describes ever happened at all, whether the little girl Anna actually existed, or whether Hopkins was using the character of a little child to illustrate his own thoughts about life and religion. But the introducer to the first edition, theologian Vernon Sproxtton (Rowan Williams wrote a subsequent Introduction), actually met Hopkins having read his initial draughts before publication, and seen some of his documents and keep-sakes about the little girl, and concluded that the story was true, although Hopkins may have embellished parts of it.

And so we have Anna, the 'astonishing child'. Her innocent but questioning view of the world gave her an insight into some theological and other issues that have confounded adults throughout the ages. Even the opening passage of the book has a charm about it that would touch most hearts:

"The difference (sic) from a person and an angel is easy. Most of an angel is in the inside, and most of a person is on the outside.' These are the words of six year of Anna ... At five years Anna knew absolutely the purpose of being, knew the meaning of love and was a personal friend and helper of Mister God. At six Anna was a theologian, mathematician, philosopher, poet and gardener. If you asked her a question you would always get an answer – in due course.'

The ultimate tragedy of Anna's life is that she never made it to her eighth birthday. She fell off a fence and subsequently died. In Chapter 7 Hopkins gives two remarkable illustrations of how she communicated to him her love of 'Mister God.' The Kingdom of God was like a radio repair (she had seen

Hopkins repairing a radio): one could either work on it from the 'outside in' or from the 'inside out'. Thus people who thought they were Christians were on the outside, seeing all the teaching and commandments, but not practising them; whereas those inside the Kingdom were practising their teaching and commandments, as well as believing them. This applied to Sikhs and Muslims as well as Christians.

Theirs was a shared relationship: Hopkins took Anna to a dressing table and placed a black line between the two wing mirrors, moving each window towards the other so that the black line appeared to move correspondingly, seeming to prove that things in the world were not always as they seemed., just as the rules of mathematics could be beaten by reflected images: 2 appeared as 5 in reflection. So 2 plus five could equal 7 or 4, or even 10. All this to Anna seemed to confirm the mysteries of 'Mr. God', a concept that both she and 'Fynn' realised simultaneously.

Mr. God, this is Anna is available in an omnibus edition entitled Anna and Mr. God, with the later works Anna's Book and Anna and the Black Knight and published by Harper Collins in 1978, or each title is available separately.

Andrew Simpson



THY KINGDOM COME

As a follow on to our Lent Try Praying initiative, we will be seeking to engage with the Thy Kingdom Come. This was an Anglican initiative that began last year by Justin Wellby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and is this year being supported by the Methodist Church (and other denominations).

After Jesus' ascension into heaven the disciples waited in Jerusalem for the gift of the Holy Spirit (at Pentecost). Inspired by this, Thy Kingdom Come, seeks to be a global prayer movement, encouraging people to spend the time between Ascension and Pentecost waiting on God in prayer. We hope to make available a Prayer Journal to encourage us to pray for these 11 days, and in particular to pray for 5 people we know throughout this time.

We will begin this period of prayer and waiting by joining together for a 30 minute act of worship led by Tony Wragg to celebrate Ascension Day on Thursday 10th May at 6.30pm.





Sponsored Walk June 23rd 2018

Would you like to support the work of Exeter Foodbank? Last year we helped to support over 5000 local residents with emergency food; almost one third of these were children.

If you are interested in joining our walk please contact us for the information.

Tel: 07818 226524

Email: walk@exeterfoodbank.org.uk

Let us not talk the talk about fighting food poverty.
Let us walk the walk.



Joyfest

Between Monday 4th – Sunday 10th June Wonford Methodist Church will be joining with other churches across Exeter for a celebration of smiles and brightened days.

The strategy comes from Jesus. He said, *“Let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.”* (Matthew 5:16)

Joyfest is a week of intentional good deeds for friends, family and strangers. It's a chance to focus our efforts, take a step out of our comfort zone and do something simple to brighten someone else's day. These are the 'good deeds' Jesus asks us to do.

But we want the praise to go to God, not to us, so the Joyfest initiative helps people join-the-dots; seeing that our good deed isn't because we're nice, but because we follow God, who is full of generosity, kindness and joy.

Each time you do an act of joy or have a conversation you can give someone a Joyfest card, with the website address for more information. It will take a bit of bravery, but everyone can do something to make someone smile. It doesn't have to be a terrifying leap into the unknown; even a small step out of our comfort zone is a powerful declaration of faith!

Maybe you could imagine yourself saying something like, *“Hi, I'm taking part in Joyfest, it's like a social experiment to brighten the day of people in Exeter, so I wondered if I could pay for your coffee? Here's a card with some info, if you're interested.”*

For more information, please pick up a leaflet at Church – and start planning your (random) acts of kindness.



Monday 4th - Sunday 10th June

A celebration of smiles and brightened days initiated by the Church in Exeter

Prayer Focus for May

Do not worry but pray about everything!

Pray each week for those who will lead our worship from the pulpit, in music and who teach our children in church on Sunday or in the Girls' Brigade and in the Toddler groups.

Week beginning 6th.

This week please pray for those Countries around the world that are at war. Pray for the children caught up in the destruction, some having lost their families, and for those who try to help them. Pray for those who are trying to rebuild



Week beginning 13th.

Please pray for the many charities set up to help those in need. Pray that they would use their funds wisely. We can't give to every charity but we can all pray for them.



Week beginning 20th.

PENTECOST SUNDAY. HAPPY BIRTHDAY CHURCH. On this day of Pentecost pray that we will all be open to the Holy Spirit as the Disciples were in the Upper Room. Pray for those we love that have not yet accepted Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, that they would,



Week beginning 27th.

This week please pray for everyone at Wonford Methodist Church. You may not know all the names but picture them in your mind and our Lord knows each by name.



May you all be richly blessed as you pray for all the activities at Wonford, surrounding area & the wider world.

News From The Methodist Church

“Reforms are urgent, now is the time for tough action”: Dame Margaret Hodge

Christian leaders united in the House of Lords on Tuesday 17 April to challenge government inactivity on tax justice reforms and to demand immediate tough action. Launching “Church Action for Tax Justice” (CAT), President-Designate of the Methodist Conference, the Revd Michaela A Youngson, joined Lords Rowan Williams and Richard Harries, Dame Margaret Hodge and Quaker Leader Paul Parker to demand an end to corporate tax evasion, greater transparency and a change to the negative narrative around tax.

In her speech to a packed committee room, the Revd Youngson said: “I hope we can shift the narrative around tax away from it being a dirty word, or a necessary evil, but rather a blessing and a means of all citizens having a stake in a generous society that cares for all.” Dr Rowan Williams talked about an “unquenchable thirst for more” in the corporate sector (referencing the name of the Christian Aid report), a “wilful blindness” amongst policy makers and how tax should not be “an us and them but a recognition of shared goals and mutuality”.

Opening the meeting, Dame Margaret Hodge, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Responsible Tax, congratulated the new initiative, saying: “there has never been a more important time than today to address issues of tax justice...this is not anti-business but pro fairness...Reforms are urgent, now is the time for tough action.”

CAT will seek to inspire all Churches about the urgency of creating fairer and more effective tax systems to fund healthier public services, both in the UK and internationally.

Dr Rowan Williams, the Chair of the Christian Aid Board, said: “The creation of this new Church-wide movement is timely. Many of the world’s largest companies seem to have forgotten that they have moral duties, as well as legal ones. They must support human flourishing, not least by paying their fair share of taxes in all the countries where they do business - and being fully transparent about the relevant data.”

Ending financial secrecy in UK tax havens like the British Virgin Islands is

one of the reforms CAT will pursue, along with changes to the way large multinational companies are taxed.

In addition, the new campaign will call on Churches themselves to make more vigorous and vocal use of their power as investors in major companies.

CAT has developed out of the Methodist Tax Justice Network and seeks to be more ecumenical, embracing all Church denominations.

One recent sign of the success of the worldwide movement for tax justice has been the decision by Vodafone to publish its country-by-country reports from 2019 onwards. Christian Aid, the Tax Justice Network and others have long campaigned for major multinationals to publish such data, because it can throw up suspicious patterns that alert tax authorities and civil society to potential tax dodging. This, in turn, helps them to hold companies to account.

The President and Vice-President's Easter message

In their Easter message, the President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference focus on the Resurrection.

The Revd Loraine N Mellor reflects on the song "I can only imagine", which reminds her of the first Easter morning when the women went to the tomb and discovered what had happened.

She says: "No resurrection erases the tragedy of the Cross. Nothing erases the violence and the horror of Good Friday ... But, it is now time to rejoice and to smile and for our faces to display hope, for the tragedy of the Cross could not shut holy love out of the world."

Lorraine invites to consider what our reaction will be to the Resurrection when we wake up on Easter morning.

Living in Glasgow, the Vice-President Jill Baker has spent a lot of the year travelling. She uses that image to think about Jesus' journey to the cross and beyond, along with the journey of his disciples and friends, including the women who accompanied him.

She asks: "What are you waiting for at this point in your journey of life or of faith? What are we waiting for, or hoping for in our congregations, circuits, districts, in the Connexion? "

And then offers the response: "After ... waiting and watching, we will be ready for the sun to rise in splendour, ready for a dawn of unimaginable glory to break."

Dates For Your Diary

May 2018

| | | |
|----------|------------|---|
| Thu 3rd | 7.30 p.m. | Membership Class in the lounge - session 3 ** |
| | 7.30 p.m. | Wonford Worms Book Club meets |
| Sun 6th | 10.00 a.m. | Hannah Richards - All Age Worship |
| | 6.30 p.m. | Rev Steve Santry |
| Tue 8th | 7.30 p.m. | Home Group meets at 20 Whipton Lane ** |
| Thu 10th | 6.30 p.m. | Ascension Day Service |
| | 7.30 p.m. | Membership Class in the lounge - session 4 ** |

Christian Aid Week. 13th to 20th May 2018

| | | |
|----------|------------|---|
| Sun 13th | 10.00 a.m. | Rev Bruce Sawyer - Sacrament |
| | 6.30 p.m. | Monika Noronha - Prayer & Praise |
| Thu 17th | 2.00 p.m. | Bible Study in the lounge ** |
| Sat 19th | 3.00 p.m. | Wedding of Samantha & Kiefer ** |
| Sun 20th | 10.00 a.m. | Rev Brenda Mosedale |
| | 4.00 p.m. | Messy Church |
| Tue 22nd | 10.00 a.m. | Roundabout Cafe meets (until 12pm) |
| | 7.30 p.m. | Home Group meets at 20 Whipton Lane ** |
| Sun 29th | 10.00 a.m. | Caroline Colin & Mandy Denton - Africa Service ** |
| | 6.30 p.m. | Stephen Lea |

**** 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***

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 June 2018 Newsletter will be Sunday 13th May 2018. 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