# Wonford Methodist Church

# Contact Newsletter

## November 2026

(No: 555)






**Rev Mmasape Thathane-Tyolweni**
**(minister@wonfordmethodistchurch.org.uk)**

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# A Message From The Minister

## As the Dust Settles

In my last article, I wrote of beginnings: new roads to learn, names to remember, communities to encounter and rhythms of ministry to discover. Now, as the moving-in dust begins to settle, I find myself thinking about what it means to make a home; not only in a new place, but among one another.

There are still boxes to unpack and details to find their proper place. Yet a home is made through more than familiar furniture or knowing which road to take. It grows through shared worship, conversation, laughter, hospitality, and the small acts of kindness by which we make room for one another. I am grateful for the welcome I have received across The Mint, Wonford and Temple, and for the patience and generosity shown as I continue to find my feet.

As autumn deepens, the Church's calendar invites us to pause and remember. All Saints gives thanks for the faithful people whose lives have helped shape our faith. Some are well known; many are not. Their witness reminds us that holiness is often found in ordinary lives lived with courage, compassion, and love. We give thanks for those who have encouraged us, taught us, prayed for us, and helped us recognise God's presence along the way.

Remembrance invites us to hold both gratitude and grief. We remember those who have died in war and conflict, and all who continue to bear the wounds of violence. We also remember the people whose absence is part of our own story. In these acts of remembrance, we bring our sorrow and our longing for peace before God. May our remembering move us towards compassion, justice, and a deeper commitment to peace in our homes, communities, and world.

Then Advent begins. It is a season of waiting, but not passive waiting. We watch, hope, and prepare for the coming of Christ: God drawing near in vulnerability and love. Advent asks us to make room; to listen for the voices and hopes we may have overlooked, and to notice where new life may be taking root.

These seasons speak to me as I continue settling into this new appointment. We remember the people and stories that have brought us here; we pay attention to one another in the present; and we look ahead with hope, trusting that God is already at work among us. We do not need to have everything unpacked or every answer ready. We can keep learning, praying, and discerning together.

Thank you for the many ways you have helped me feel at home. May this autumn give us space to remember with gratitude, to stand with one another in grief, and to prepare with hope for the light of Christ.

**Revd Mmasape Thathane-Tyolweni**

# Dates For November 2026

## Coffee & Tea




| | |
|---|---|
| 1st | Ev & Melanie |
| 8th | Rose & Paul |
| 15th | Elaine & Graham |
| 22nd | Margaret D & Terry L |
| 29th | Ann & John |

## Bible Study Group

Our fortnightly Friday Bible Study Group meets in our Lounge at 3pm to 4.30pm. They will be continuing their study on God's Amazing Gift of Grace, In November they meet on the 6th and the 20th.
Please speak to Monika Noronha or Terry Spencer if you want further details.
**Monika**

## Away Group Bible Study

This group meets on a Monday evening every fortnight at 7.30 pm in the lounge. Dates will be announced in the notices on a Sunday morning.

## Monthly Prayer Meeting

This group will meet in the lounge at 9am on Tuesday 17th November 2026. All are welcome to attend

## Roundabout Café



This month the Roundabout Café meet on Tuesday 17th November 2026.
We welcome our own John Davidson who will tell us about Jack Rattenbury, Fishermen, Privateer, Pilot and Free Trader who could be seen walking the streets of

Sidmouth and Beer in the early 19th Century.
We meet from 10.00am until noon with coffee and cakes.
Please join us if you can.

Photos below from the Roundabout Café coffee morning in July.





## Wonford Welcome Drop-In for Everyone
## Saturdays 10.30am to 12.00pm.

Wonford Welcome Drop-In for Everyone - Saturdays 10.30am to 12.00pm.
In November we will be having the following activities for you to join, if you would like to, alongside a free cuppa & biscuits.

**7th November** - there will be coffee & chat in the lounge this week and you can help process a few gift shoeboxes in the hall for Blythswood Care - these will arrive in Ukraine in time for Christmas.

**14th November** - we will be having a few rounds of Picture Bingo with small prizes for a line and a full house. There will also be a Warm Welcome 2 course meal at midday.

**21st November** - it is World Television Day and we will be having a Big TV Quiz, so please join in with teams of up to five people and there will be a prize for the winners.

**28th November** - it's time to see if you can 'think of an answer nobody else has' in The Alphabet Game. There will also be a Warm Welcome snack meal at midday.

Wonford Welcome is open to all; everyone, whatever their age, background or beliefs, will receive a warm welcome! If you are able to spread the word, put up a poster or share it on social media please do. And if you haven't been along yet please do come and join us one Saturday.

**Alison, Helen, Liz, Mandy, Monika, Paul & Rose, and Sue K**

## Church Council Meeting

All are welcome to the next Church Council meeting in the Church Hall at 7.30pm on October 27th.

## Autumn Clean October 3rd - A BIG Thank You

We had lots of people at the Autumn Clean and got a lot done! Aa huge Thank You to everyone who took part.



## Blythswood Care Shoebox Appeal 2026

Last November, in our Wonford Church Hall, the Exeter Blythswood group processed and sent 1,636 shoeboxes from Exeter & East Devon to people living in abject poverty in Ukraine. It is a blessing to think that our boxes brought a little bit of happiness to each of the people opening them in December and discovering the gifts inside! We continue to pray for the people of Ukraine – for safety & shelter, reconciliation & restoration and for peace across their land.

We are collecting boxes through Blythswood Care again this year. Blythswood Care is an established Christian charity based in Glasgow, Scotland. They bring hope to families in poverty in Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia through filled shoeboxes at Christmas, relief and development aid or social projects for young and old. Their new motto is 'Changing lives for good and forever'.

You need to cover a shoebox in wrapping paper with the lid wrapped separately so it can be opened easily and they can be for adults as well as teenagers and children. The categories are Male or Female; Preschool, Primary, Teenager, Adult or Elderly.

Their website www.blythswood.org will provide a full checklist of items that can be put in the shoeboxes and you can print of a label from there, but there are also leaflets available in the church hall. The donation towards cost of transporting each shoebox is £3. Date for final collection at Wonford Methodist is Sunday 7th November.

**Most important items** - toothbrush & toothpaste, soap & flannel, hat/scarf/gloves, underwear, sweets (dated at least March 2027), a small toy and pencils/pens/ paper. Other suggested items for children - a ball, skipping rope, hair accessories, puzzles, toy car, stickers. For adults – shampoo up to 250ml, deodorant, comb, sewing equipment, candles (but no matches), kitchen utensils, screwdriver/pliers, pack of cards, small wind up torch and for teenage girls/woman- sanitary products.

To any of our talented knitters, each year we are most in need of scarves, large hats and mittens or fingerless gloves please, for both children and adults. You might like to add in a Christmas card with a message, your name & town/country but do not put in your address. If you have any questions or you want to donate a few items or money instead of filling a box then please let me know - all contributions are very welcome and will help to put a smile on the faces of people who live in such poverty. Please do contribute if you can. This shoebox may be the only gift they have ever been given and what a Christmas present for someone truly in need!

**Sue Keatt**

## ‘Little Letters’ Themed Preaching Series

In September 2026 we began a themed preaching series that takes us up to Christmas.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Nov 1 | All Age Worship | Mary Hext |
| Nov 8 | James 5 | Rev Mmsape Thathane-Tyolweni (S) |
| Nov 15 | 1 John 1 and 2 | Dr Jon Curtis |
| Nov 22 | 1 John 3,4,5 | Andy Mulcock |
| Nov 29 | 2 and 3 John | Paul Skinner |
| Dec 6 | All Age Worship | TBA |
| Dec 13 | Jude | Rev Mmsape Thathane-Tyolweni (S) |
| Dec 20 | Advent | Rev Terry Spencer |

## Walk In The Light

(1) Long ago, 1950’s, I was a theological student in Manchester. Our college chapel had a modern, magnificent, stained-glass window of the Risen Christ! It was truly uplifting to gaze daily on Jesus during prayers and worship.

Sadly, numbers of men and women offering for the ministry fell alarmingly, and our Methodist College was sold to an Islamic College for boys! Our chapel became a mosque, and Islam prohibits all images in their buildings, so the light streaming from that wonderful window of Christ is completely sealed off!

(2) During the previous eclipse of the sun in England in August 1999, I was a long-serving prison chaplain in Liverpool. One of my inmate ‘flock’, Martin, was keenly working on a tapestry, trying to produce his version of Holman Hunt’s famous painting, The Light Of The World. He intended to present it to our prison chapel when the eclipse took place in August 1999. But two prison officers, on routine duty, entered Martin’s cell, and confiscated his tapestry and needle.

Martin appealed to me to intervene, but I was told that no prisoner was allowed to possess a 2-inch needle. End of story. The Light Of The World was extinguished! (eclipsed)

(3) When the recent eclipse happened, August 2026, vast crowds viewed it in a wide variety of viewing spots, and it was indeed spectacular. The moon tried hard to block the sun, and in some European countries there was a total eclipse, but the darkness was eventually overcome by the light! The enormous crowds quickly dispersed with their eclipse photos!

But, as brilliantly shown in Holman Hunt’s picture, JESUS is the true Light of this world, and He goes on knocking on the unopened doors of all our

hearts: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice, and opens the door, I will come in to him/her, and will sup with him/her and they with Me!” The door in the painting has no handle. It can only be opened from inside, to welcome in the Light of the world. Our glorious opportunity is to WALK IN THE LIGHT!



*“Light of the world, You stepped down into darkness,*
*opened my eyes, let me see beauty that made this heart adore You,*
*hope of a life spent with You.*
*So here I am to worship, here I am to bow down,*
*Here I am to say that You’re my God!”*

**Rev Malcolm Carter**

Postscript. I invite you to pause briefly, then pray these words out loud, finishing with a joyous Amen!

# Prayer Focus for November 2026

**Week Commencing Sunday 1st November All Saints Day**

At this time of year, the church gives solemn thanks for the saints, both famous or obscure. We give thanks for all those who have gone before us and shared the love of God with us. We remember them.

*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
*Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.*
*Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.*
*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,*
*for they will be filled.*
*Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.*
*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.*
*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*
*Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

**Matthew 5:3-12**

**Week Commencing Sunday 8th November Remembrance Sunday**

Lord, we give thanks for all who gave their lives so that we might experience peace. We pray for peace in all world conflicts afflicting our world today. May today's acts of remembrance challenge all who think that war is a good way to solve the problems that nations have with each other.

*My people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth.*
*I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things, things from of old – things we have heard and known, things our ancestors have told us.*
*We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done.*

**Week Commencing Sunday 15th November**

In the Celtic Christian calendar, Advent begins today. It is a 40-day period of waiting and preparation before the birth of Christ is celebrated. Lord, Christmas is well and truly on the agenda in our society today; in the shops, the Christmas markets and on our screens, but all in such a materialistic way. Help us to stop, to ponder the meaning of your coming into this world and help us to prepare our hearts to, once again, receive the joy of your coming.

*He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.*
*As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: 'A voice of one calling in the wilderness, "Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.*
*Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth.*
*And all people will see God's salvation."*

**Luke 3:3-6**



**Week Commencing Sunday 22nd November**
**[2nd Sunday in Celtic Advent]**

*But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.'*

**Matthew 1:20-21**

Lord, many angels were involved in the time before you entered our world as a human baby. Fill our hearts with wonder as we consider what we believe about angels and how you might speak to us today in the 21st Century.

**Week Commencing Sunday 29th November 1st Sunday of Advent**
**[3rd in Celtic Advent]**

*The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognise him.*
*He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.*

**John 1: 9-11**

Lord, may we speak hope and bring light into the lives of our friends and neighbours who don't yet know you. Amen.

**Christmas Gifts for Homeless People Through Bread of Life Outreach.**

In my role as Circuit Steward at the Mint Methodist church, I have met staff involved with the local charity Bread of Life Outreach which provides support & food for people who are homeless & vulnerably housed in Exeter and Mid Devon.
Every Thursday & Friday evening the charity uses the kitchen and the Mint church to serve hot meals for 40 - 50 people who are 'street associated'. As far as I know, these men and women are unlikely to receive a gift this Christmas - it is a time of year when people without family support and a place to live often feel very lonely and forgotten. I hope to be able to change that in a small way by giving a gift bag containing a new pair of socks,

shower gel, a packet of nice biscuits, a hand warmer and a small wound kit to each of them on a Thursday evening just before Christmas.
Please consider giving a donation if you can and do pray for the men & women who do not have a safe place to call home, especially as the weather starts to get colder.



Thank you
**Sue Keatt**

## Olwen Foggin - Autobiography Book Launch

A passionate representative for the Wonford Community in which she lives. A former councillor and mayor of Exeter, who though retired still works tirelessly for the community she loves. She has found a new home at Wonford Methodist Church.



# News from the Methodist Church

3Generate continues to grow from strength to strength. Last weekend (3–4 October), 1,800 young people, alongside 500 group leaders and 350 volunteers, gathered at the NEC Birmingham for the annual Methodist Children and Youth Assembly. Young people aged 8–18 from across the Connexion came together for a jam-packed weekend of worship, learning and fun.

This year's 3Generate explored the theme On The Way, a celebration of the lifelong and ever-unfolding journey of faith. On The Way invited every child and young person, whatever their starting point, to take a meaningful next step with God. Each attendee received an On The Way Adventure Book, providing a year's worth of activities and reflections.

The delivery team transformed the NEC's vast exhibition halls into a centre of fun and faith, creating more than 20 venues and welcoming over 2,600 people.

The wide range of venues ensured that every child and young person could find a space that reflected their interests. There were opportunities to explore faith and Methodism in ways that suited different stages of the young people's spiritual journeys. Worship took many forms, from quiet reflection and prayer to vibrant gatherings where hundreds of young people danced and sang along with live bands. Elsewhere, activities ranged from rock climbing, art and basketball to discussions on anxiety and insights into daily life in the West Bank.

Gracie Silk, Youth President, had a vital role at 3Generate welcoming and hosting the young people. "I love when people gather together to praise God. I also enjoyed getting the opportunity to lead parts of that. Just being able to look out and see loads of different people from different parts of the Connexion was amazing.

"Sometimes it can feel quite isolating for a young person in the Methodist Church, especially when they come from like a smaller youth group or a rural area. To be in this space and to find out that there are other young Methodists that they can be around and they can be in fellowship with is so important. There were so many good-news stories from this weekend of children and young people finding God or feeling God for either the first time or once again."

Daoud Nassar, whose family are winners of the World Methodist Peace Award and run the Tent of Nations, an educational and ecological family farm located south-west of Bethlehem that promotes peace, shared what

life is like for those in Palestine. “It was important for me to tell the story, what we are facing as a family there, as Christians, as Palestinians, in this very difficult reality. I wanted to deliver a message of hope to the young generation that, wherever you are, you can make a difference.
“It would be wonderful if we could have an event such as 3Generate in Palestine, in Bethlehem, but there is no freedom of movement there and they do not have that many opportunities.”

In the Foundry venue, young people shared their lived experiences covering issues such as being a carer, coming from rural communities, ethnicity, neurodiversity and LGBT. Sam Roberts from the Sheffield District was helping in the venue. “The young people just wanted to have conversations. Some felt like they were the only person in that situation in their church, but then to come across so many other people was a freeing experience.”

Deacon Sarah McDowell, from the Southend and Leigh Methodist Circuit, who has attended 3Generate for the past six years, said: "It's expanded and grown enormously. The range of activities 3Generate now offers young people is incredible. Our young people in the Methodist Church are invested in, not only financially, but through time, care and resources. The Bible and journal they have received this year are fantastic.”

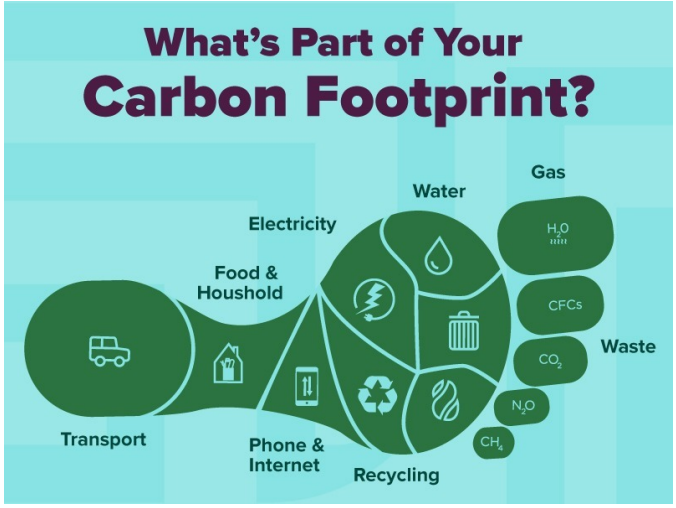
Youth President Gracie was also keen to recognise the people who helped make 3Generate possible. "I want to thank all the volunteers and youth leaders. From those bringing groups from their local churches, to those setting up venues and serving on the delivery team, every single volunteer has played a part in making this event possible."

**Churches Pilot New Carbon Footprint Tool**
A groundbreaking new Methodist Church pilot will allow churches to track their carbon emissions as the Church moves towards a net zero future.

The Methodist Church has long been committed to reducing its carbon footprint across the Connexion, amid the increasing threat of climate change in the UK and across the world.
But it has often been difficult for individual churches to measure their emissions, leading to problems in getting an accurate overall picture.
Now the Bristol and Yorkshire West Districts, and the Trinity Circuit in the Sheffield District, are taking part in a new pilot of a carbon footprint tool which, if successful, could be implemented across the Connexion.
At the Methodist Conference earlier this year, it was noted that the

Connexional Council has directed the Connexional Team to implement a mechanism that enables churches to record their carbon footprint.
Climate stewards are working to develop a carbon footprint tool, building on their existing tool, 360 Carbon, which is used by over 600 Methodist churches.
The new tool will help churches to better understand their carbon emissions, as well as allowing circuits, districts and the Connexional Team to understand emissions across the whole Connexion, aggregate data and monitor progress towards becoming a net zero Church.
It will help churches to identify ways they can reduce their emissions, becoming more energy-efficient and saving money on energy costs.
Finally, it will help churches to monitor their progress in reducing their emissions, and see the effect that energy efficiency measures have had. This will enable churches to access external funding, as funders will often want to see the impact funding has made.
Across September and early October, the Connexional Team will be working with churches and climate stewards across three districts to pilot the tool, with feedback being used to develop it and ensure it's ready for churches across the Connexion to use from January 2027.
Dr Hamish Leese, Director of Environmental Engagement, said: "The new carbon footprint tool is a key milestone in the Methodist Church's ambition to be a net zero Church, allowing us to establish a baseline for our emissions and understand how we can reduce those emissions.

"Crucially, the tool will allow churches, circuits and districts to understand their carbon footprint and the actions they can take to reduce it, and to include the Church's net zero ambitions in their planning.
"The Methodist Conference identified climate change as a crisis for God's creation and a fundamental injustice, and we recognise engagement with these issues as inherently and inescapably ones of mission and discipleship."



# Dates For Your Diary

## November 2026

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Sun 1st | 10.00 a.m. | Mary Hext - All Age Worship |
| Fri 6th | 3.00 p.m. | Friday Bible Study in the lounge ** |
| Sat 7th | 10.30 a.m. | Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) ** |
| **Deadline for Blythswood Boxes** | | |
| Sun 8th | 10.00 a.m. | Rev Mmasape Thathane-Tyolweni |
| | | Sacrament Service / Themed Preaching ** |
| Sat 14th | 10.30 a.m. | Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) ** |
| Sun 15th | 10.00 a.m. | Dr Jon Curtis - Themed Preaching ** |
| Tue 17th | 9.00 a.m. | Monthly Prayer Meeting in the lounge (until 10am) ** |
| | 10.00 a.m. | Roundabout Café (until 12pm) ** |
| Fri 20th | 3.00 p.m. | Friday Bible Study in the lounge ** |
| Sat 21st | 10.30 a.m. | Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) ** |
| Sun 22nd | 10.00 a.m. | Andy Mulcock - Themed Preaching ** |
| Sat 28th | 10.30 a.m. | Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) ** |
| Sun 22nd | 10.00 a.m. | Paul Skinner - Themed Preaching ** |

**** Details in this newsletter or on the notice board in the hall.**




The deadline for items for the December 2026 Newsletter will be Sunday 15th November 2026. There is no guarantee of inclusion, but they may be given to:

Andrew Jackson - 19 Hills Orchard, Martock, Somerset. TA12 6DF.

Tel: 07818455600 or e-mailed to andrew.m.jackson@me.com

# 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 *(not every week)*

**Monday**

7.30 p.m. The Away Group in the lounge *(Fortnightly)*

**Tuesday**

9.00 a.m. Monthly Prayer Meeting *(3rd Tuesday)*
10.00 a.m. The Roundabout Café *(3rd Tuesday)*

**Wednesday**

**Thursday**

**Friday**

9.30 a.m. Friday Toddlers Group ***A***

3.00 p.m. Fortnightly Bible Group in the Church Lounge

**Saturday**

10.30 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.
Wonford Welcome Drop-In
Tea, coffee and biscuits are free.

( ***A*** = No meeting during school holiday)