# Wonford Methodist Church

# Contact Newsletter

## October 2026

(No: 554)






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

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# A Message From The Minister

## Beginning Together Reflections on My First Month

*Exeter Coast and Country Circuit*

My first month in the Exeter Coast and Country Circuit has been a month of beginnings: new roads to learn, new names to remember, new communities to encounter and new rhythms of ministry to discover.

Moving from East London to Devon has brought a significant change of scenery. Here, the city, coast, and countryside each speak in their own way. Yet amid all that is new, I have encountered something wonderfully familiar: God's people gathering for worship, sharing their stories, offering hospitality, and seeking to serve their communities faithfully.

At The Mint, Wonford and Temple, I have begun to glimpse the distinctive character of each church. Each has its own history, gifts, challenges and hopes. I do not arrive with ready-made answers or a programme to impose. I come wanting to listen, learn and discern with you where God is already at work among us.

These first weeks have included worship and Holy Communion, meetings and conversations, shared laughter, generous meals, and moments of prayer. They have also included the inevitable experience of finding my way, sometimes quite literally! I am grateful for every welcome, every introduction and every person who has helped me understand the life of our churches and the wider circuit.

Beginning a new appointment reminds me that ministry is relational. We do not simply share buildings, rotas, or programmes; we share life. We meet one another carrying joy and grief, confidence and uncertainty, faith, and questions. Christ meets us there and invites us to become a community in which love is made visible.

My hope is that we will make room for deep listening: to God, to one another and to the communities beyond our church walls. I hope we will be patient enough to discern well, courageous enough to try new things and gracious enough to learn when things do not go as planned.

I look forward to discovering how we can deepen our worship, nurture people of every age, strengthen our presence in the community and make room for voices that have not always been heard. We may not know everything the coming years will hold, but we can trust the One who calls us forward.

Thank you for the kindness with which you have received me. I look forward to learning your stories, sharing ministry with you, and discovering what

God will bring to life among us. May this be a season in which we begin together, with prayer, openness, courage, and hope.

**Revd Mmasape Thathane-Tyolweni**

# Dates For October 2026

## Coffee & Tea




| | |
|---|---|
| 4th | JoJo & Melanie |
| 11th | Sue M & Sarah T |
| 18th | Jenny S & Alison |
| 25th | Linda & Mervyn |

## 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 October they meet on the 9th and the 23rd.
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 20th October 2026.
All are welcome to attend

## Roundabout Café

This month the Roundabout Café meet on Tuesday 20th October 2026.
We welcome our own Rev Malcolm Carter on the theme of

**Happiness**

We meet from 10.00am until noon with coffee and cake.
Please join us if you can.

## 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 August and September we will be having the following activities for you to join, if you would like to, alongside a free cuppa & biscuits.

**3rd October** - please come along to help with our Church Autumn Clean-up! There will be table top games for this who are not involved in the cleaning.

**10th October** - The Wonford Health Matters group will be speaking with people about a Bereavement Support Group.

**17th October** - we will be having our Big Autumn Quiz, so please join in with teams of up to five people and there will be a small prize for the winners.

**24th October** - we will be collecting items for the Blythswood Shoe-box campaign and wrapping empty shoeboxes in Christmas paper ready for next week. If you can, please bring some items on the list (go to www.blythswood.org or see leaflet in the hall)

**31st October** - we'll be collecting items and making up gift shoe-boxes ready to send to people in need in Ukraine.

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 Help Wanted!

You have probably heard of a Spring Clean? On October 3rd we are having an Autumn Clean of the Church giving it an extra clean and a spruce up! It would be great if you could join us between 10.30am and 12pm. Dusters and refreshments will be provided!

Helen

## 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 begin a themed preaching series that takes us up to Christmas.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Oct 4 | All Age Harvest Service | Rev Dr Brenda Mosedale |
| Oct 11 | James 2 | Rev Mmsape Thathane-Tyolweni (S) |
| Oct 18 | James 3 | ICE Team |
| Oct 25 | James 4 | Rev Terry Spencer |
| 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 |

## Celebrating 10 years of Eco Church

***Psalm 24:1-2 The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it, for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters.***

This year marks ten years of A Rocha UK's Eco Church Programme. Over 9,000 churches have now registered. A few years ago, our church joined and was awarded the Bronze medal. The Green Team at church hope we can move to a silver medal.

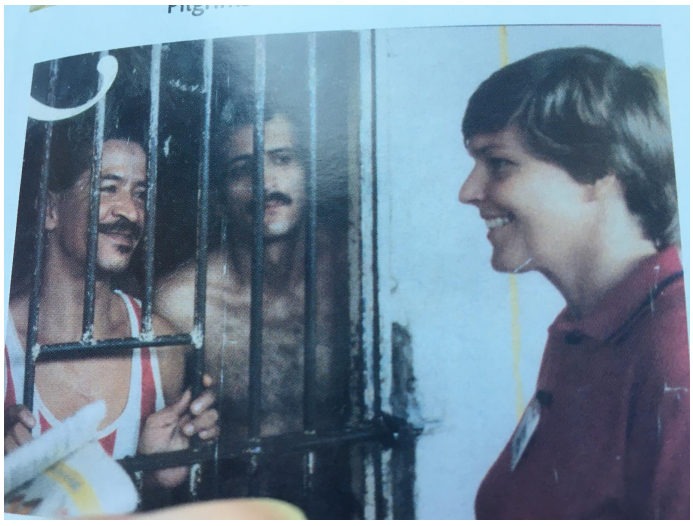
Eco Church encourages churches to care for creation across every part of church life – from worship and teaching to buildings, land and community

engagement and lifestyle choices at church and at home. It was launched in 2016 with support from Tearfund, Christian Aid and the Environmental Issues of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.
Wonford Church has solar panels on the roof, we use eco friendly cleaning products and buy fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar. We regularly pray for our World, Disasters and the Environment. All small things but together we can make a difference in church and at home.
The Green Team at church was formed over 6 years ago with the aim of encouraging the church to be as environmentally responsible as it can be. We look after the flowerbeds and keep them watered using the water butt. We have a noticeboard in the hall to show any relevant information and are consider ways we can work towards a silver medal. Writing a piece for Contact is part of this. We would welcome some new members – green fingers are not necessary!!
On Saturday 17 October the Mint Methodist Church is celebrating the South West Eco Church 10th Anniversary with a special ecumenical service followed by refreshments and workshops, a few of us have booked to attend. A Rocha CEO Andy Atkins and Helen Stephens, Head of Church Relations as well as singer-songwriter /Andy Flannagan will be leading the worship. If anyone would like to join us or to find out more, please speak to a member of the Green Team at our church.

**From the Green Team: Alison, Helen, Liz and Sue Keatt**

## What's The Plan?

Throughout my 20 years as a chaplain in Walton Jail, Liverpool, I was often asked if I had scary moments working in (during 1980-2000) the largest prison in Western Europe. "Never", was my answer. When prisoners saw that I was on their side, trying to help and befriend them, they were happy to co-operate.
One day, I read about Bellavista Maximum Prison in Medellin, Colombia, where 3000 inmates were crowded, often six men crammed into a cell designed for one. Its reputation was frightening, mind-boggling. Many prisoners were drug dealers or from a para-military background; often ten prisoners were murdered every week by 'sicarios'! (paid assassins) A very dark place indeed!



Amazingly, things began to change. A former prisoner began to share the Gospel in Bellavista's dungeons, and he invited a young teacher, Jeannine Brabon, to help, teaching inmates the Christian faith and how to sing songs of praise. The killings stopped immediately, and a blessed ministry began. Dozens of men were openly converted to Christ!
I managed to contact Jeannine, and asked, should she ever be in England, if she would consider visiting Walton Jail, to tell her story to the men in my care.
Several months later, Jeannine appeared! She brought with her a pair of wooden, praying hands, beautifully carved by Carlos, one of her congregation, out of one piece of wood. She passed it round, unhurriedly, for every man to handle. Then Jeannine said, "This carving symbolises that **our God has a plan to shape something beautiful out of each of our lives!**"
Jeannine told us of her ministry at this notorious prison, where now 300 men meet each week to worship and sing God's praise. Our men were gripped, and broke into spontaneous applause. It was memorable!

**Rev Malcolm Carter**

*Postscript.* Pray for all those who have a low esteem of themselves. Pray that the Lord will develop their talents and abilities, and give them a vision of what their lives can become, when Christ is welcomed into their hearts.
Pray that God will shape something beautiful out of YOUR life. **That's the plan!**

# Prayer Focus for October 2026

**Week Commencing Sunday 4th October Harvest Festival**

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his love endures for ever.
*Psalm 118:1*

As we celebrate our Harvest Festival today, we thank God for all the ways in which he provides for all our needs.



**Week Commencing Sunday 11th October**

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
*Philippians 4:6-7*

Lord, please teach us to be thankful people. We thank you that you call us to bring all our anxieties to you and that you offer a peace that will guard our hearts and our minds.

**Week Commencing Sunday 18th October Church Action on Poverty**

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in…
*Matthew 25:35*

We give thanks for all the churches and organisations seeking to care for the poor both at home and abroad. We thank you for the work of All We Can and for Christians Against Poverty [CAP].

**Week Commencing Sunday 25th October Bible Sunday**

He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything new!' Then he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.'
*Revelation 21:5*

We thank you God, for all those whom you inspired to write down all the words that formed our Bible. May it continue to inspire and teach all who read it. Thank you that it still speaks to our hearts today, throughout all these centuries.



# Bible Word Search - Books of the Bible




**Acts, Amos, Colossians, Ecclesiastes, Ephesians, Ezekiel, Ezra, Galatians, Hebrews, I, II Chronicles, I, II Corinthians, I, II, III John, I, II Kings, I, II Samuel, I, II Timothy, Isaiah, James, Job, Joshua, Lamentations, Leviticus, Luke, Malachi, Nahum, Numbers, Obadiah, Philippians, Psalm, Revelation, Song of Solomon, Zechariah, Zephaniah**

# Dates For Your Diary

## October 2026

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Sat 3rd | 10.30 a.m. | Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) ** Including Autumn Clean Up |
| Sun 4th | 10.00 a.m. | Rev Dr Barbara Mosedale - Harvest Festival |
| Fri 9th | 3.00 p.m. | Friday Bible Study in the lounge ** |
| | 6.30 p.m. | Harvest Social |
| Sat 10th | 10.30 a.m. | Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) ** |
| Sun 11th | 10.00 a.m. | Rev Mmasape Thathane-Tyolweni Sacrament Service / Themed Preaching ** |
| Sat 17th | 10.30 a.m. | Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) ** |
| Sun 18th | 10.00 a.m. | ICE Team - Themed Preaching ** |
| Tue 20th | 9.00 a.m. | Monthly Prayer Meeting in the lounge (until 10am) ** |
| | 10.00 a.m. | Roundabout Café (until 12pm) ** |
| Fri 23rd | 3.00 p.m. | Friday Bible Study in the lounge ** |
| Sat 24th | 10.30 a.m. | Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) ** |
| Sun 25th | 10.00 a.m. | Rev Terry Spencer - Themed Preaching ** |
| Tue 27th | 7.30 p.m. | Church Council Meeting ** |
| Sat 31st | 10.30 a.m. | Wonford Welcome Drop-In (until 12.00 pm) ** |

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




The deadline for items for the November 2026 Newsletter will be Sunday 18th October 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)