**Woodford Methodist Church: Redevelopment and Outreach Project, 2023.**

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon son of Jonah, do you love me more than these?’ He said to him ‘Yes Lord; you know that I love you’. Jesus said to him ‘Feed my lambs’. A second time he said ‘Simon, son of Jonah, do you love me?’ He said, ‘Yes Lord; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him ‘Tend my sheep’. (Jn 21:15-16)

The Gospels are filled with examples of Jesus either receiving hospitality or sharing in food with groups of people. The feeding of the four and five thousand people comes to mind and the celebration of the Lord’s Supper is at the heart of our faith. In the passage above Jesus demands that the flock is fed and cared for. This is at the heart of Woodford’s vision (Prov.29:18) for its future and how it reaches out to its local community in a time of need.

Woodford Methodist Church has committed itself to praying about the project and to discern where the church is being led by the Holy Spirit. Our Church Council on the 1st March,2023 decided to support a transformative project of outreach and renewal, believing firmly that this is what the Holy Spirit is calling the church to do and to be.

**Aim:**

To offer a modernised set of premises where people can be fed, answering a known local need and likewise, a venue where people can be taught how to cook, which is also a verifiable local need, stemming from an earlier open meeting. The premises will also provide an adequate community larder. The current provision is insufficient in comparison to the demands placed upon it. This aim is underpinned by a desire to feed and care for the local community both physically and spiritually. By offering hospitality, care and a good place for people to be, Woodford MC exhibits the characteristics of The Methodist Church in Britain’s ‘Our Calling’ to evangelism, service, care and discipleship. The project will:

1: Create a community kitchen and larder

2: To develop and enlarge the community garden and to create a Men’s Space within the existing church.

3: To replace the roof, install solar panels and redecorate the outside of the premises.

4: To improve internal ablutions making disabled toilet facilities and access more readily available.

5: To provide space for a youth room and a meeting space. The church is aware of the need to provide space for people’s wellbeing, particularly for those who are suffering from anxiety, depression or poor mental health. In a rural setting where resources are scarce and deprivation is evident (Census 2021) Woodford MC. seeks to offer a therapeutic space for both church folk and the community at large. Woodford MC. will engage with the NHS, local social services and Mr Andy Jerrard (Rural Worker) to determine what provision might be needed and capacity to deliver.

6: To improve the internal aspects of the church to make it a welcoming and useful space for the local community and for worship. A place where Woodford M.C. may honour its commitment to feed and tend the people of the locality in answer to Jesus’ demand to do so.

Woodford M.C is already working with local architect, Lyndon Piper, to progress the scheme and deal with any planning applications. Woodford M.C. is committed to becoming an ‘A Rocha Eco Church’ and to work in association with Transforming Cornwall.