Friends

The 18th of January marks National Winnie the Pooh Day and also World Religion Day which seemed a wonderful excuse to reflect on what Pooh might make of Methodism.

"I think," said Pooh thoughtfully, sitting on a very small chair in a very large hall, "this Methodist Church is a bit like a jar of honey that everyone is invited to share, even if they haven't brought a spoon".

Pooh like that people here sang together, not because they were always terribly good at it, but because they meant it. It reminded him that hymns, like hums, work best when you do them with friends. And he noticed that the people were very keen on *connexion* which sounded to Pooh like the sort of thing you have when you hold hands so nobody gets lost on the way to tea.

"They seem to think a lot about being kind on purpose," Pooh went on, "which is a sensible thing, because kindness left to itself sometimes wanders off." He admired how the Methodists tried to make sure everyone had enough – enough hope, enough listening and importantly, enough cake.

In the end, Pooh decided that the Methodist Church was a place where faith wasn't meant to be rushed, but walked along together, at a gentle pace, stopping often to see who might need a bit of help – or a bit of honey – along the way.

I must admit to having asked AI for help with the above, but sharing the load is yet another way in which Methodism (and indeed all Christian faiths) often operate. Whether we are wrestling with personal and individual things, or large and corporate things, we often find that sharing the thinking and perhaps the worrying with others is a good thing. In the same way, Jesus shared with his disciples in those three crucial years of his ministry, and Paul shared with other evangelists on his missionary journeys. We may not be as familiar with Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, Priscilla, and Aquilla and so on, but they were all a crucial part of the ongoing work, as each and every one of us is here in the churches in which we have been planted.

God bless, Vicci