

## Message from our Minister, Rev James Patterson

Happy New Year!!!

Alright, yes I know that we are just saying goodbye to summer and that 2026 is still sometime away, but... 1st September 2025 marks the beginning of a new Methodist year. It'll be the start of my fourth year with you, and at Methodist Conference (the church's governing body) this summer, with a new Methodist President, we have a new theme: Our Story, Our Song. According to the President, Rev Richard Andrew, it is "an invitation to the Methodist Church to ask itself, 'Who do you think you are?' 'And what song are you singing in God's world?'" It is an opportunity to remind ourselves "that we are part of something far greater than ourselves. We are woven into the ongoing story of God's love in the world, and invited to sing that story with our lives."

You may be aware that I attended Methodist Conference this year representing this Circuit and District. I really enjoyed it, and I am still reflecting on it with the hope I will be elected to go again next year. In his vice-presidential address, Matthew Forsyth asked a question that has really captured my imagination, and it's one that I would love to try and unpack with you and Amersham and Chesham, along with the wider presidential theme: 'Why are you/ we here?'

What a question isn't it? It's a question directed to us as disciples of Jesus Christ, but also to us as a church, as Christ's body on earth. To me it's a question to help us reflect on what brought us to church in the first place, which will hopefully enable us to remember the people who have come alongside us and enabled us to flourish over the years. Matt went on to say that it is "a simple question that opens sacred possibility. You did not come here by accident. You have a part to play. You are not just a listener to this story; you are a line in it. Not just a voice in the congregation, you are a note in the song."

As a church in Prestwood we profess to be "a worshipping and friendly community following Jesus", whilst seeking "to deepen our own discipleship and to reach out in a loving way into our local community." May this coming year be one of reflection on our story and how we are singing it out as disciples of Jesus, seeking to love our God with all our being, and loving our neighbour as ourselves.



James

We heard the sad news that our dear friend, Peggy Barrett, died on 20 August at the care home where she had been staying in Holmer Green. Her son and daughter were with her in her last few days, and her passing was peaceful. Her funeral will be on 15<sup>th</sup> September – details in the accompanying email or in weekly notices at church. Peggy held many roles in the church, including superintendent of our Junior Church for many years. We raise our prayers for comfort for her family.



## Services for the next quarter at Prestwood Methodist Church

Date	Preacher	Service
7 September	Rev James Patterson	Holy Communion
14 September	Harold Smith	Morning service
21 September	Kate Hoskin	Morning service
28 September	Rev James Patterson	Harvest festival
5 October	Rev Adam Wells	Holy Communion
12 October	Pam Sitford	Morning service
19 October	Rev James Patterson	Morning service
26 October	Rev James Patterson	Bereavement service
2 November	Harold Smith	Morning service
9 November	Rev James Patterson	Morning service - Remembrance Sunday
16 November	Stewards	Local arrangement
23 November	Rev James Patterson	Holy Communion
<b>30 November</b>	<b>No service at PMC</b>	<b>Circuit @ Amersham High Street</b>

A copy of the circuit plan is on the [Amersham circuit website](#) and on the church noticeboard. This includes other services around the circuit.

### Online Bible Studies

We meet for a regular Bible study online on alternate Tuesdays at 7pm. Contact Rev James or Bridget to confirm dates and for login details (or check your weekly email).

## Who's who at Prestwood Methodist Church

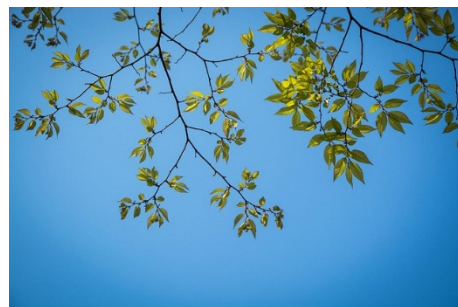
Please feel free to contact us about any relevant matters.

Minister:	Rev James Patterson
Superintendent Minister:	Rev Adam Wells
Stewards:	Mary Spooner
	Sandie Wheatley
	Bridget Appleby
Weekly prayer group; Church Council Secretary; Pastoral Secretary; Flowers:	Tina Hillas
Friendship club:	Mary Spooner
Communion stewards:	Sandie Wheatley
	David Hillas
Treasurer:	John Deakin
Hall bookings, Property Steward:	Malcolm Appleby
Gift Aid Secretary:	Joyce Griffiths
Safeguarding. Weekly notices and Open Door:	Bridget Appleby

## Light and Shade

*By Susan Marlow, 1942-1995, with kind permission of Paul Deakin and Christine Smith*

A beautiful summer's day, clear blue skies and no clouds. The sea an even deeper blue than the sky. Just a hint of a little wave rushing on to the beach. A large tree with beautiful green branches shading the sand. Most of the sand is shaded, but the few people on the beach are sitting in the sun. A large group of young people are sitting together just in the sun. One person is standing at the edge of the sea and another is looking for shells. Then, there are two more in a different patch of sunlight sitting a small distance apart.



The whole picture is symbolic to me. The shade from the tree represents the hard lines of life which seem to creep up on people and maybe harm them. The people are in the sunlight enjoying life with its precious moments. They can stay there for a bit, but not for ever. Gradually the shade will come and envelop them. When they are in full sunlight God's love seems to surround them, but he is also there when they cannot see him. The whole place is quite quiet, so the birdsong and the sound of little waves breaking on the shore speak to them of God's love.

If only we could remember scenes like this when we are depressed, life would be greatly enriched. Sometimes we seem to be almost overwhelmed with the darkness, but however dark it might seem to be there is always hope. Just as after the dark night of winter, springtime follows with new life and new birth.

## Friendship Club

Future events are:

17 September David Tester - Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF)

15 October Trip to Hillier Garden Centre (Marlow)

19 November John & Mary Cadman - Brazil

10 December Children from Prestwood Infant School entertain



The Friendship Club meets on a Wednesday (see specific dates). Normal meetings are at the Prestwood Methodist Church, where tea is served from 2.00pm, with a talk or other activity around 2.15pm. The afternoon finishes around 3.15pm. Transport can be arranged. Occasionally we have activities away from the church – such as our trip to a garden centre in October.

Friendship Club is open to men and women of any age (although tends to attract people who are retired). Help with teas and setting up the chairs is always welcome. Please contact Mary Spooner for details (see Who's who on page 2).

Mary Spooner

Please send items for the Winter Open Door by 31 October to [stewards@prestwoodmethodists.org.uk](mailto:stewards@prestwoodmethodists.org.uk) or see Bridget if you have something you can't email. See *Who's who* for other contact details.

## Prestwood Big Week

Prestwood Big Week took place from 15-21 June and I was pleased to attend two events. Both were very interesting and certainly engaged and entertained our community. Thanks should certainly go to those who gave their time and energy to make it happen and I hope there will be many more.

Firstly, Holy Trinity Church enjoyed its 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year and their celebrations concluded with a Flower Festival weekend. Local businesses and organisations sponsored beautiful floral displays artistically arranged by a team at Holy Trinity. Christine Jarvis created one for PMC at the front door to their church entitled 'Prestwood-on-Sea' and it was very attractive in shades of blue, white and green with an embellishment of seaside shells, pebbles and a starfish!



*'Prestwood-on-Sea'  
sponsored by PMC*

Secondly Mark Cunnane, gave a really interesting and informative talk with photos at PMC on a very hot evening! Having lived in Prestwood all his life and with many schoolboy memories he showed the development of the High Street from when it was a hamlet to the road we all know today. Many local people came to this event and there wasn't a spare seat anywhere in the church or even on the balcony! How lovely it was to see our church packed to the rafters and several visitors commented on what good facilities PMC had. Let us hope that now they have seen inside PMC, one or two might try a Sunday service!

*Sandie Wheatley*



A full church for Mark's talk



Even the balcony was full – with Sandie & Matthew's help

## PMC – the Open Door

It's really quite traumatic  
when you stand before the door  
of a building you have never  
seen the inside of before.

That's how it felt one Sunday  
when I came to Prestwood Church —  
I hoped there'd be a hidden seat  
in the back row, where I'd perch.

But no, my fears were unfounded,  
I was greeted at the door —  
"Oh, do come in, you're welcome."  
Have you visited us before?"

I was introduced to people  
(whose names I then forgot,)  
I enjoyed the humour in the sermon  
and the hymns I liked a lot.

And I come now every Sunday  
to a place where I've found friends,  
where people know the meaning  
of the love that never ends.

So thank you, everybody,  
for the welcome that you give,  
you've made me feel that Prestwood  
is the perfect place to live.

*Jean Colegrave*