



## Prestwood Methodist Church

**A worshipping and friendly community following Jesus**

Minister: Rev Nigel Wright 01494 431819

Stewards:

Sandie Wheatley

Bridget Appleby

Mary Spooner

Website: [www.prestwoodmethodists.org.uk](http://www.prestwoodmethodists.org.uk)

Email: [steward@prestwoodmethodists.org.uk](mailto:steward@prestwoodmethodists.org.uk)

### Sunday 24 May 2020: 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter, Sunday after Ascension and Aldersgate Sunday

You really are spoiled for choice on readings this week. Whether you want to focus on Aldersgate Sunday, Ascension or the liturgy readings, there is a message of hope in all of them. The disciples and the Wesley brothers, like us, had to work out what the “new normal” would look like for them.

The theme of this week’s Radio 4 Sunday service sounds encouraging, and will be one to accompany me on my morning cycle ride.

We have started to look in more detail at how we use the church again for worship, but it is still early days.

Rearranging the chairs to maintain social distancing, the

picture is more positive than we thought, but there are many risk assessments, guidelines and checks to make before we restart any activities in the building.

Bridget



### Virtual Church

Amersham Methodist Circuit YouTube channel this week is being led by Rev Nigel Wright, and you might spot another familiar face doing the Gospel reading. See [tinyurl.com/vz9y45q](https://tinyurl.com/vz9y45q)



News came too late to let you know in the notices, but hopefully you received the email with details of Rev Jenny Stephens preaching on YouTube, from a church in Ontario, Canada. You can still catch her at [youtu.be/dGIP5LcBSyg](https://youtu.be/dGIP5LcBSyg) if you missed her.

See **Worship during the pandemic** from the Methodist Church homepage at [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk) for more suggestions.

### TV and radio



Radio 4:

Sunday Worship at 8.10am ‘Living well while waiting’ with the Bishop of Sheffield.

BBC 1:

I’ve noticed the BBC don’t seem to be able to stick to a consistent time for Sunday Worship, and this week you’ll have to wait until **11.45** for service from Bangor Cathedral.

Songs of Praise this week is replaced by Islands of Faith at 1.15pm, with Katherine Jenkins looking back at stories of faith from islands around the British coastline.

### Readings for this week:

With Ascension on Thursday, and this Sunday being both the 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday and Aldersgate Sunday, you have multiple choices of readings.

The Amersham Methodist Circuit YouTube service this week uses two readings associated with Aldersgate Sunday, and the conversion of John and Charles Wesley:

Romans 5:1-11

Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

Nigel picks up on the Romans reading in his reflections and thoughts this week, seeing a message of hope in the reading that could bring warmth to the heart of John Wesley in 1738, and hope to us in the COVID-19 crisis of 2020.

For a 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday, the readings are:

Acts 1: 6-14

Psalm 68: 1-10, 32-35

1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11

John 17:15-21

The Acts and John reading are picked up in the Central Methodist Church worship resources, which also look back to Ascension. The reflection makes a comparison between the bewilderment of the disciples, having watched Jesus ascend, and being unsure what their “new normal” will look like.

For Ascension, the readings are:

Acts 1: 1-11

Psalm 47, Psalm 93

Ephesians 1:15-23

Luke 24: 44-53



## Prayers of praise by Alison Seren in Methodist Church Worship at Home

Everyday God,

We praise you that you are with us in every part of our lives and you never stop loving us.

We praise you for the world you created and the beautiful things we see around us.

We praise you that you came to earth in Jesus to show us in person how much you care about us and the world we live in. As we remember your ascension, we thank you that you did not leave us alone but sent your Spirit so that we can always know you are with us.

You invite us to join in your work of loving people and the planet and we pray that you show us how we can share in your mission of love.

In Jesus name we pray

**AMEN**

## A prayer from Rev Nigel Wright

Almighty God, we thank you that you are a gracious, a generous and a great God.

What you have done for us through Jesus Christ is beyond our comprehension, and so we come before you praising our Saviour all the day long.

We thank you for that encounter John Wesley had with you almost 300 years ago and the way that it transformed his life and ministry.

We thank you for the encounters that we have had with you during our lives, and for those encounters that we are yet to have with you, and we pray that you will continue with the process of transforming our lives and guiding us each in the ministry that you have for us both as individuals and together as a church.

We pray for a sense of peace that passes understanding and that you will turn us outwards to bless each other, our neighbours, our communities and our nation. **AMEN**

## Hymn for Ascension

When I was at school Ascension was a special day. We had mass at school in the assembly hall, with the chairs facing the window not the stage. This hymn reminds me of those joyful celebrations.

### Alleluia! Sing to Jesus (StF 568)

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus,  
his the sceptre, his the throne.  
Alleluia! His the triumph, his the victory alone.  
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion,  
thunder like a mighty flood;  
Jesus, out of every nation, has redeemed us by his blood.

Alleluia! Not as orphans  
are we left in sorrow now.  
Alleluia! He is near us, faith believes, nor questions how.  
Though the cloud from sight received him  
when the forty days were o'er,  
shall our hearts forget his promise, 'I am with you  
evermore'?

Alleluia! Bread of angels,  
thou on earth our food, our stay.  
Alleluia! Here the sinful, flee to thee from day to day.  
Intercessor, friend of sinners,  
earth's Redeemer, plead for me,  
where the songs of all the sinless sweep across the crystal  
sea.

Alleluia! King eternal,  
thee the Lord of lords we own.  
Alleluia! Born of Mary, earth thy footstool, heaven thy  
throne.  
Thou within the veil hast entered,  
robed in flesh, our great High Priest;  
thou on earth both priest and victim in the eucharistic feast.

*William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898)*

Reproduced from Singing the Faith

There are multiple versions of this hymn on YouTube, but I found the pictures helpful in [youtu.be/Bkt-qoeACJM](https://youtu.be/Bkt-qoeACJM)

## Prayers of intercession by Alison Seren in Methodist Church Worship at Home

God our protector,

We come before you in prayer for your world, your children and ourselves.

We pray for the world that you have made. We thank you for the renewal of creation springing up as human activity has been restricted. We pray that we will learn to value these gifts and to live more gently in the future.

We pray for the leaders of nations making impossible decisions on our behalf. We pray that they will speak and act with integrity and protect those who are most vulnerable.

We pray for our church communities. We bring you our sadness at not being able to meet together and we thank you for the people finding it easier to explore faith at this time. We pray that we will find new ways to reach out to the world.

We pray for the people we miss. Our friends and families and those we long to see face to face. We pray for safety and protection for our loved ones.

We pray for those who have lost someone they love and haven't been able to say goodbye. We pray that they will know the comfort of your loving presence and that you will show us how to reach out in love and friendship.

We pray for ourselves in these difficult days shared by so many people but also lived in isolation. Help us to know your protecting love and to live in the power of your Spirit.

In Jesus' name we pray.

**AMEN**

### ***The Lord's Prayer***

Our Father...