



**Histon
Methodist
Church**

Rev. Alison Walker,

18th May 2020

(Service sheets for Sundays 24th and 31st May are below)

Dear Friends

Looking ahead to the next two Sundays, I felt sad. Ascension and Aldersgate on the 24th, Pentecost on the 31st – these special Sunday have so many good hymns and songs and we won't be able to sing them together. I've realised that whilst I can pray at home using word or silence praising God without singing is hard for me. When I was learning the piano, I started to play some of the worship songs at home and found that singing and playing at home was an important way to praise God, perhaps it is something I will have to try again.

It's not only hymn-singing that I'm missing though, it's the way that singing a hymn really needs to be done together. I can read the words as part of my praying, but without a congregation, it just doesn't feel the same. It's hard to feel like a participant when singing along to Songs of Praise or a youtube service. Even when I join the online 'Zoom' worship for Toft, we still cannot sing together as the open microphones create a cacophony, so we sing along with the leader, but insulated in our own homes.

I'm reminded of Psalm 137:4 "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" said the community in exile. Here is another metaphor for these days of lockdown – it feels as if we are in exile from our own lives, kept away from our 'homeland' of the usual routines, from familiar places and cherished people. How can we praise God in these days of disruption and exile? The answer will be different for each person, but be assured that it is possible. There will be moments of "How can we?" but there will also be times when we feel the liberation of spirit that transports us away from all restrictions. If bellowing away "My chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose went forth and followed thee" helps in those moments, then do it! Just as the Israelite people learnt, we can sing the Lord's song in our own strange land because God is with us, always with us.

Love and prayers, Alison

The ecumenical initiative "Thy Kingdom Come" invites us to join in 10 days of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost. With apologies to those receiving the letter in print the link to the main booklet is here <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/sites/default/files/2020-04/Prayer%20Journal%202020%20C19V.pdf> There are also 2 sides of A4 with 10 daily prayers included with this newsletter.

Histon Methodist Church Notices

Sunday 24th May 2020

Services that we can all take part in:-

8.00 am Sunday service on Radio Cambridgeshire.

8.10am Sunday worship on Radio 4

BBC 1 Sunday worship at 10.45am and at 1.15 pm Songs of Praise. (These times are correct at time of publishing but please do check on programme guides just in case they are changed)

This week we pray for Judy and Joy and all in their pastoral groups.

A Reflection from Margaret

I was at College on May 8th 1945. There was a thanksgiving service in the afternoon and a rather exuberant dance at night, but no crowds of jubilant students making whoopee. What I most remember is the feeling of a lessening of tension as though we had all been screwed up a notch since the Spring of 1940 and now we were released. Of course most people had been worried about family and friends in the forces or the big cities but perhaps in the back of our minds we also wondered if we found ourselves in a bad "incident" would we be brave enough and now we *would* not be tested. We could stop being afraid. Next day we went back to work, final exams were just a few weeks away.

Nothing much seemed to alter, we were still rationed for food, clothes and sweets. In fact the food ration went down. I suppose, though our ships were sure to come safe to harbour so much food was needed elsewhere. Hundreds of prisoners of war had to be fed, hundreds of living skeletons from the camps had to be fed and nursed, The Netherlands and our own Channel Isles were on the brink of starvation and from the Atlantic to the Russian front line there were so many ruined towns where food trains had to be restored.

Saint Paul said three primary virtues were faith, hope and love. In Europe in 1945 there was little faith in their leaders and just a glimmer of hope but I am sure, while there are people walking on the earth there will be an abundance of love. That is the faith by which we try to live.

Margaret

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A global wave of prayer



PRAYERS FOR ADULTS

PAGE 1



We pray for ourselves, to be witnesses for Jesus Christ

Ascension Day to Pentecost

THESE PRAYERS ARE FOR ADULTS TO PRAY with God's worldwide family for more people to come to know Jesus Christ, and for themselves to be empowered by the Holy Spirit, to find new confidence to be witnesses for Jesus Christ. Each box represents a gift from God. Use them to plan your own prayer journey: say a prayer for yourself from page 1 and the corresponding prayer for others from page 2.

Belonging

Thank you, Lord, for welcoming me into your family and blessing me with the confidence and joy of knowing that nothing can separate me from your love. May I share that joy with others and may your kingdom come. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Grace

Draw a heart and write on it words that reflect how you feel in your own heart, and the names of people to whom you would like to be more generous.

God of truth, empty my heart of all that hurts me and you and others, and fill it with your grace. Amen.

Courage

Do you need courage to share your faith? Or to do something in your life right now? Write the answers in small letters on a piece of paper and then in huge letters, write: JESUS GIVES ME COURAGE AND GOD IS MY STRENGTH, TODAY AND ALWAYS. AMEN.

Wisdom

Find a picture or object that represents the most pressing thing on your mind. Hold it and pray: God of my head and my heart, bless me with clarity and discernment in the decisions I must make. Bless me with trust and humility in my journey of faith. Amen.

Joy

Walk around or visualise your local area and pray joy into every home and office, every farm, school and shop. Pray joy into your own heart too, and treat yourself to something on your way home.

Compassion

God of the cross, may my heart break when others cry; may I sit with those who call out 'Why?'; may I hold the hands of those in pain; may I comfort those alone again. May I join each day in the Lord's Prayer and may your kingdom come. Amen.

Forgiveness

Take a piece of string and tie a knot in it for anything that weighs heavily on your heart and for what you would like to feel forgiven. Name each thing and untie a knot as you say sorry, trusting in God's mercy.

Healing

Are there any relationships in your life that need healing? Friendships where trust has been lost? Faith where prayer has become dry? Family situations where tension makes life difficult? Entrust them to God and pray for healing in Jesus' name.

Hope

Lord Jesus, as you have brought hope to my heart and life, may I be a bringer of hope to others: the suffering, the anxious, the weary, and the rejected, that they may find faith in you and be blessed. Amen.

Peace

Lord God, sometimes it seems as if the world is in turmoil and there is little hope for world peace. Help me to stay strong in prayer and bold in action. I pray that peace may begin with me: in my heart, my life, my community. In Christ's name. Amen.

Love

Light a candle and remember those you have loved who have died. Thank God for their lives, look at photos of them or think of special moments. Pray that everyone would have love in their life and would be comforted when loss comes.

A global wave of prayer



Ascension Day to Pentecost

Each box represents a gift from God. Use them to plan your own prayer journey: say a prayer for yourself from page 1 and the corresponding prayer for others from page 2.

PRAYERS FOR ADULTS

PAGE 2



We pray for others, that they come to know Jesus Christ



Belonging

Gracious God, we pray for those longing to be accepted... longing to be acknowledged... longing to be given a second chance... longing to be loved... May your kingdom come and transform their longing into joy. Amen.

Grace

Generous God, by your grace transform our hearts. Turn bigotry into tolerance, closed doors into open ones and inspire unity where there has been division. Make your Church a home for all who long for love and acceptance. May your kingdom come. Amen.

Courage

Lord of Gethsemane, we pray courage for people afraid of those who govern them; for people afraid of those they work with; for people afraid of those they live with. We pray for courage for every fearful heart. Amen.

Wisdom

God of our universe, as we journey further in space, bless us with knowledge and wisdom, as we pioneer new treatments, develop social media, and live side by side. Bless us that your kingdom may come and your will be done. Amen.

Joy

To those whose faith has grown stale, we pray the joy of freshness. To those separated from family and friends, we pray the joy of reunion. To those who are unemployed, we pray the joy of work. To all people in all places, we pray the joy of knowing Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Compassion

Cut out stories from a newspaper or magazine about compassion. Give thanks where it has been shown and pray for those situations where it is needed.

Forgiveness

God of justice and of mercy, we pray for those whose crimes seem beyond forgiveness: for those who kill, abuse, torture and exploit. Forgive them and us, whenever we hurt others. We ask this in Jesus' name who called out, 'Father, forgive them', even as he died. Amen.

Healing

Gracious God, we entrust to your love those longing to be healed: those in hospital, those at home, those whose addictions plague their life, those whose past still haunts them. Be with them in their pain, their frustration and their fear. Amen.

Hope

Light a candle after every bidding.
Eternal God, where war has destroyed and divided, kindle the flame of hope; where poverty has diminished and demoralised, kindle the flame of hope; where confidence has been drained and damaged, kindle the flame of hope. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Peace

Light a candle and on pieces of paper write all the places in the world that lie heavily on your heart; the names of those you know who have no peace of mind; families where there is division. Place them around the candle and imagine each one being brought to Jesus and blessed.

Love

On the cross you suffered, Lord. We pray for those suffering today. On the cross you forgave, Lord. We pray for those needing forgiveness today. On the cross you showed us God's great love for the world. We pray for that world today. Amen.

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

Sing to God, sing praises to his name; lift up a song to him who rides upon the clouds—his name is the LORD—be exultant before him. (Psalm 68)

As I come before you God help me to praise your name. Focus my mind on your presence with me and remind me that I am joined together with people around the world worshipping at home. May your name be glorified in our worship. Amen.

Hymn: Earth's creator, everyday God

Singing The Faith 45

Sing, read or pray the words or listen here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1oNP4vaW_c

or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

Earth's creator,
everyday God,
Loving Maker,
O Jesus,
you who shaped us,
O Spirit,
recreate us,
come, be with us.

In your presence,
everyday God,
we are gathered,
O Jesus,

you have called us,
O Spirit,
to restore us,
come, be with us.

Life of all lives,
everyday God,
love of all loves,
O Jesus,
hope of all hopes,
O Spirit,
light of all lights,
come, be with us.

In our resting,
everyday God,
in our rising,
O Jesus,
in our hoping,
O Spirit,
in our waiting,
come, be with us.

In our dreaming,
everyday God,
in our daring,
O Jesus,
in our searching,
O Spirit,
in our sharing,
come, be with us.

God of laughter,
everyday God,

God of sorrow,
O Jesus,
home and shelter,
O Spirit,
strong and patient,
come, be with us.

Way of freedom,
everyday God,
star of morning,
O Jesus,
timeless healer,
O Spirit,
flame eternal,
come, be with us.

Word of gladness,
everyday God,
word of mercy,
O Jesus,
word of friendship,
O Spirit,
word of challenge,
come, be with us.

Gentle father,
everyday God,
faithful brother,
O Jesus,
tender sister,
O Spirit,
loving mother,
come, be with us.

Our beginning,
everyday God,
our unfolding,
O Jesus,
our enduring,
O Spirit,
journey's ending,
come, be with us.

Alleluia,
everyday God,
now and always,
O Jesus,
alleluia,
O Spirit,
through all ages,
come, be with us.

Bernadette Farrell (b. 1957)

Let us pray together

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 Collect for Aldersgate Sunday

God of overwhelming grace,
you ignited the spark of your grace in John
and Charles Wesley and a passion for
holiness, justice and sharing your great
love with others.

Warm our hearts that we may trust in you.
Renew our conviction and inspire us to
embrace new opportunities even in
difficulty.

Pour out your spirit on your people that we
may be united in your love and ready to

share hope with the world through Jesus who is one with you. Amen

Today's Reading from the New

Testament: Acts 1: 6-14

The Ascension of Jesus

So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

Matthias Chosen to Replace Judas

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

Today's Gospel Reading: John 17: 1-11

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

'I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

Time to Reflect

"Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven?"

They hadn't really had a chance to think about it. Surely it's the most human thing in the world to keep watching the space

where someone was, to need to see to be able to believe and start to understand, to need some time to adjust to a huge change in the features of your everyday life?

There has started to be talk in the media about a “new normal”. Many of us had already started to experience the creeping realisation that things will not quickly or immediately go back to exactly how they were. Our lives are going to look different for a significant period of time, or for some of us forever if we too have lost people who made up the fabric of our lives. Jesus’ disciples have a promise, of the Holy Spirit to help them, but they don’t know when. Like us they must adjust as best they can to the new circumstances of their lives.

I wonder what they understood of the ascension they had witnessed and the prayers they may have heard Jesus utter like the one we read in today’s Gospel. In this Jesus asks that he be glorified, not for himself but for his followers. As Jesus ascends he brings all his human experience with him so that it is known within God. Remember that how ever you are feeling today God is with you.

Jesus asks that God will protect his followers so that they might be united, one as Jesus and the Father are one.

What might we learn about unity and fellowship from our experience of isolation? -How might we draw closer to God and to other people as we emerge into a new normal?

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

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

Hymn: Hail the day that sees him rise
Hymns and Psalms 197

Sing, read or pray the words or you can find an older version of this hymn at
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7b_ODz_jqTs

Hail the day that sees him rise, Alleluia!
ravished from our wistful eyes! Alleluia!
Christ, awhile to mortals given, Alleluia!
reascends his native heaven: Alleluia!

There the glorious triumph waits: Alleluia!
lift your heads, eternal gates; Alleluia!
wide unfold the radiant scene; Alleluia!
take the King of Glory in! Alleluia!

Him though highest heaven receives,
Alleluia!
still he loves the earth he leaves; Alleluia!
though returning to his throne, Alleluia!
still he calls the world his own: Alleluia!

See! He lifts his hands above; Alleluia!
see! He shows the prints of love; Alleluia!
hark! His gracious lips bestow Alleluia!
blessings on his Church below: Alleluia!

Master, parted from our sight, Alleluia!

high above the azure height, Alleluia!
grant our hearts to you may rise, Alleluia!
following you beyond the skies: Alleluia!

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

A prayer of blessing

Holy God,
be with me as I leave this time of worship.
May I know your presence in my everyday
and live your message of love and hope.
Amen

Original Materials by Alison Seren

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of thine eternity.

Opening Prayer

Christ appears to His disciples saying,
“peace be with you.”

Holy Spirit, prepare my heart to know your peace afresh and to celebrate the Good News of God’s Kingdom.

Hymn: Breathe on me breath of God (StF 370)

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9s8BFHThfc>

Breathe on me, Breath of God
fill me with life anew,
that I may love what thou dost love,
and do what thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
until my heart is pure;
until with thee I will one will,
to do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
till I am wholly thine;
until this earthly part of me
glows with thy fire divine.

Breathe on me, Breath of God:
so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life

Let us pray together

Gracious God, in all places and at all times you are loving, generous, kind and compassionate. From the beginning of time, your Spirit has hovered on the surface of the deep and in that Spirit you have formed us; cherished and valued us. Let this be my song of praise; I love because you first loved me.

Generous God, give me a heart of gratitude for all those things that speak of your love. For friends and family, for the gifts of your creation, and for all the places I have witnessed something of heaven. *(we call to mind those things for which we are grateful this week)* Amen.

Living and loving Lord, have mercy on me. Pardon and deliver me from all my sins, strengthen and renew me for your service, that I might live and work to your praise and glory, and the coming of your Kingdom on earth. Amen.

Christ tells us that we are saved not condemned by God. God is love; we are forgiven, and forgiven to the full. Amen.

Today’s Reading from the Acts of the Apostles Acts 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' But others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.'

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

"In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,

and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Today's Gospel Reading: John 20:19-23
When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

Time to Reflect

Both our Pentecost reading from Acts and our Gospel are stories from the life of the early Church.

The reading from John reminds us that this was a time of fear and uncertainty for the disciples, who had to lock their doors in fright. In the midst of this, Christ appears to them and gives them the gift of

the Holy Spirit, offering them His peace. In our own time of being shut away, and of living in fear and uncertainty, we are invited to know that Christ appears in the midst of us as well, saying “peace be with you.”

Our Acts reading is full of celebration and excitement and perhaps those are alien emotions for us at this time. Pentecost is considered to be the birth of the Church. It might feel like a cruel celebration when we can't be in our church buildings. But at its core, the reading reminds us that God's Kingdom is radically inclusive; those from all nations are able to hear the Good News, and all who call on the name of Lord will be saved. Let us remind ourselves that the Church is alive and blossoming in our hearts, even when we can't meet; the message of Pentecost is still as true as it ever was. Our lives may look different to their normal pattern but we are still part of God's people, welcomed into God's love.

God's peace and Good News are still with us. Wherever we are, we are included. Take a time to sit quietly and receive God's gifts.

A time of prayer

On all those who are sick, in body, mind and spirit, O Living God have mercy.

On those who are lonely or afraid, those who suffer from anxiety or whose souls are discomfited, O Living God have mercy.

On all those whose lives are dedicated to service; our NHS staff, the hospitality industry, our farmers and many others, O Living God have mercy.

On those who are never able to attend their

place of worship, who suffer persecution and oppression and live in deprivation, O Living God have mercy.

On those who fear they are unworthy and unwelcome in church. Who do not feel included in your Kingdom, O Living God have mercy.

On those who do not know your peace, for whatever reason, O Living God have mercy.

Time to add our own prayers of the heart, either spoken or unspoken.

Everlasting God, whose very nature is love that has no end, hear our prayers. Help us to never make you in our own image but remain in awe of your mystery, the God who was, who is and who will always be. In the name of Christ, who shows us how to love, amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: Listen to the Taizé chant “Within our darkest night”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J8BmvxqJH0g>

**Within our darkest night,
You kindle the fire that never dies away,
That never dies away**

or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

A prayer of blessing

Holy God, guard me and guide me and hide me in your heart. Bless me and all those made in your image in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

Original Materials by Jessica Dalton