

# Bangor & Holyhead Methodist Circuit

## Sunday Worship Sheet, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2026

Our worship for this week is written by Keith Alexander, Retired Visiting Preacher, Ordained Elder of the URC and member of Amlwch Methodist Church

You may wish to have your Bible to hand. Please note that the hymns are now at the back of the sheet for ease of printing. CCLI licence 556292

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### Call to worship

Bless us as we meet together, dear Lord we pray. Bless the singing of your praise, the reading of your Word, the sharing of our fellowship, the prayers that will be heard. Bless us as we meet together, dear Lord we pray. Amen

**Hymn 287** When I survey the wondrous cross

### Prayers of Adoration, Confession & Thanksgiving:

#### Adoration

You are an amazing God who would choose the simple things of this world to confound those who call themselves wise; who blesses the weak and humbles the proud, raises the lame, restore sight to the blind. You are an amazing God who chooses the people gathered here today to be your witness in this Dark World, to bring your peace and so seeds of love. You are an amazing God, and we shall praise your name!

#### Confession

When we forget the blessings of each day, whether living in poverty or plenty, good health or poor, sorrow or joy, peace or conflict, with family or alone, forgive us. Remind us that this day is a brief moment in an eternity of your love and grace, freed from all pain, hearts filled with joy, knowing your peace, together with you, forever. When we forget the blessings of each day, good Lord, forgive us.

#### Thanksgiving

Where would we be without your light? Losing our way in darkness. Where would we be without your peace? Caught up in this world's wisdom. Where would we be without your love? Looking for your warm embrace. Where would we be without your word? Searching this world for freedom. Where would we be without your power? Struggling in our weakness. Where would we be without you, Lord? Lost and in need of grace. We give you thanks for light, peace, love, word, power and grace. **Amen**

**Hymn 244** Blest are the pure in heart

**Readings: Psalm 15; Matthew 5:1-12**

#### Reflection

Our Gospel reading is set at the start of Jesus' ministry. He has been baptised and has drawn disciples to him. Now he sits, as many preachers did then, on a hillside, to start teaching the people about God's intervention in human life. We call the first part of the Sermon on the Mount

the Beatitudes because they begin, line by line, with the translated word, "Blessed". If you were to take a look at Bible scholar, Tom Wright's translation he substitutes "Wonderful News" for "Blessed." So each line is about wonderful news for various people.

I find it very uplifting to follow this translation. It becomes so much more positive and positivity is always encouraging. Thinking about it, I feel that it was a good start to the work of our Lord. It is a big announcement of what he wishes to achieve, told in a nutshell. It reminds me of the "Do Re Me" song from "The Sound of Music" that begins "Let's start at the very beginning, a very good place to start." So, Jesus sets out his programme with a crowd listening attentively.

Downtrodden people are going to see their lives turned around. Those who believed that they would carry on struggling with whatever held them back were to expect various styles of release. The people would probably have never heard such encouraging words in their lives. They were Jews, following a very strict set of laws governing every minute of their lives. The Pharisees would have been forever at their elbows to point out misdemeanours.

Now they were to be free of all this, and life would be radically changed for the good. There was much hope in the words Jesus spoke to them. They were used to travelling preachers and teachers and must have thought "This man is different." The change they were being promised was reflected in the Magnificat of his mother, Mary before he was even born.

In the old film about safely flying a jet through the sound barrier, the successful pilot tried pushing the stick forward as his predecessors had pulled it back as the natural way to make the plane climb, only to find they continued to dive. Doing what seemed the opposite was found to be the way to crack the problem. It was the opposite to what others had thought. So it was with the new life that Jesus was to advocate. The new values brought the traditional ones into disrepute. It was not the strong who would achieve what was worthwhile but the weak. The listeners would identify themselves with this. So, instead of considering themselves too weak to change their lives into something positive, they saw hope for the first time.

This tells us that we too are not incapable of making a difference to life, not only for ourselves but for others. It tells us that there is a way forward which is to follow the one who declared "I am the way, the truth and the life." I once saw a screensaver on the PC of a nurse at the Christie Hospital in Manchester which read "Smile. God loves you." As he sat on the hillside Jesus declared the same thought. His news was to bring a smile to faces. Today, you and I are included. Amen

### **Prayer of Intercession**

God of the still, small voice,  
in the stillness we seek your calming presence.  
We seek it for ourselves and our world,  
tossed and turned, shaken and broken, tormented and destroyed.  
We seek it after all the physical and emotional forces of life have done their worst-  
in the stillness after the wind, the earthquake and the fire.  
Create for us that stillness, take from our souls the strain and stress,  
so that we may be more ready for you.

SILENCE

We pray for those whose stillness is broken by loss of any kind:  
the loss of a loved one,  
the loss of a job,  
the loss of health;  
for young people overwhelmed with a sense of hopelessness

and for the elderly who have lost their youthful visions,  
and for all who bear the burden of loneliness.

In the stillness, we remember them, and pray that they may know the calm of your presence with them.

SILENCE

We pray for those who live in constant anxiety  
dreading what the future might hold for them,  
afraid to raise their hopes for better things to come lest they should be further disappointed.  
We pray for those who suffer poverty-  
those too poor to enjoy even the occasional luxury,  
those uncertain where their next meal will come from;  
the homeless and the unloved.

### **Lord's Prayer**

**Hymn 707** Make me a channel of your peace

#### **Blessing:**

**The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen**

### **Hymn 287**

- 1 When I survey the wondrous cross,  
on which the Prince of Glory died,  
my richest gain I count but loss,  
and pour contempt on all my pride.
- 2 Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast  
save in the death of Christ my God ;  
all the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his blood.
- 3 See from his head, his hands, his feet,  
sorrow and love flow mingled down ;  
did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
or thorns compose so rich a crown ?
- 4 His dying crimson, like a robe,  
spreads o'er his body on the tree ;  
then am I dead to all the globe,  
and all the globe is dead to me.
- 5 Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
that were an offering far too small ;  
love so amazing, so divine,  
demands my soul, my life, my all.

Isaac Watts (1674–1748)

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### **Hymn 244**

- 1 Blest are the pure in heart,  
for they shall see our God :  
the secret of the Lord is theirs ;  
their soul is Christ's abode.

- 2 The Lord, who left the heavens  
our life and peace to bring,  
to dwell on earth in lowliness,  
our pattern and our King.
- 3 Still to the lowly soul  
he does himself impart,  
and for his dwelling and his throne  
chooses the pure in heart.
- 4 Lord, we your presence seek,  
a vision of your face ;  
give us a pure and lowly heart,  
a temple of your grace.

vv. 1, 3 John Keble (1792–1866)

vv. 2, 4 William John Hall

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### Hymn 707

- 1 Make me a channel of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love ;  
where there is injury, your pardon, Lord ;  
and where there's doubt, true faith in you :  
*O Master, grant that I may never seek  
so much to be consoled as to console ;  
to be understood as to understand ;  
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.*
- 2 Make me a channel of your peace.  
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope ;  
where there is darkness, only light ;  
and where there's sadness, ever joy :  
*Refrain*
- 3 Make me a channel of your peace.  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
in giving unto all that we receive,  
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

Sebastian Temple (1928–1997)

from the *Prayer of St Francis*