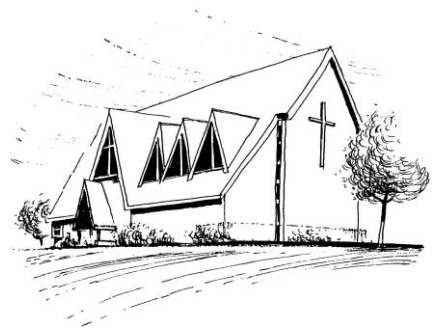


Prestbury Methodist Church

*Contact*  
*May 2025*



We extend a very warm welcome to you and invite you to join us for worship. If you are just visiting we will be happy to greet you, and hope that we may meet you again on your next visit. If you have recently come to live in the area, we hope that you will feel at home amongst us and that we may have the opportunity in the future to welcome you to our services and other events in the Church programme.

**Our Services** are usually held weekly at 10.30am, although occasional Circuit Services elsewhere will mean we do not have a service at Prestbury on those days. *See the back page of this edition of Contact or our Church website for current details plus lots more at*

[www.prestburymethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.prestburymethodistchurch.org.uk)

**The occasional Circuit On-line services**  
can be found on the YouTube Channel at

<https://www.youtube.com/c/MacclesfieldMethodistCircuit/featured>

Church website

[www.prestburymethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.prestburymethodistchurch.org.uk)

e-mail: [admin@prestburymethodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:admin@prestburymethodistchurch.org.uk)

**Minister: Revd Dr Graham Edwards**

Tel: 01625 426051

e-mail: [graham.edwards@methodist.org.uk](mailto:graham.edwards@methodist.org.uk)

**Enquiries for funerals, baptisms and weddings  
to the Minister please.**

# Minister's Letter

***Dear Friends,***

I have not always had reliable cars. On one the throttle cable snapped in the middle of rush hour near Liverpool, on another, the clutch blew on the M11, on yet another the turbo failed on the M1! I remember the feelings of helplessness, anger and frustration - I had been let down by my cars, they had failed me! It isn't only cars though, sometimes we are failed by people, and our response is often to say "I will never trust them again" or even "I'm going to get my own back".



At this time of year in the church, I always find myself amazed as I read the story of Jesus and Peter meeting after Jesus' resurrection, which is what I'm feeling as I write this! Peter had denied that he knew Jesus three times, despite saying he never would, he had failed Jesus and now he is face to face with him, risen and alive, beside the sea of Galilee. I wonder if he thinks Jesus will want nothing to do with him, perhaps he thinks Jesus will enact some vengeance, and yet that isn't what happens. As they talk, Jesus asks Peter "do you love me?" He asks three times - once for each denial, and they find a way moving forward together. A way not based on vengeance and retribution, not based on apportioning blame and judgement, a way based on love and respect and hope. Imagine what the world could be like if that were the starting point for us all – love not hate, hope not despair, forgiveness not retribution, peace not anger. Martin Luther King Jr. said "darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." I pray we might find our way to build that kind of world together.

***With every blessing***

***Graham***

# Prayers for May



All-creating God,  
whose eternal Word filled the universe and entered time,  
as a little child, to make all things new,  
Come to us.

All-enduring God,  
whose living Word described the human story,  
and re-told it with love to countless generations,  
as friend, guide, liberator and servant.  
Be with us.

All-enlightening God,  
whose abiding Word was shared as broken body  
with as many as would receive,  
that Love might reign for ever and ever.  
Remain with us.

Always.

Amen.

Gill Dascombe

**All-creating God** - We thank you for the beautiful world in which we live. As the trees and plants show us new life and fruitfulness and the animals enjoy new birth and enjoy the warmth Spring and Summer provide, we thank you Lord for your goodness. We seek forgiveness for the many times that we fail to nurture and protect your life-giving bounty and care. Help us to change our ways so that the whole of nature can thrive and live happily in the world you gave us.

**All-enduring God** – We give thanks that, despite all our failings, you stay with us and forgive these failings when we try to listen to and accept your guidance in our lives and help us to be faithful servants.

**All-enlightening God** as we have celebrated the wonder and joy of your Resurrection help us to remember that your love for us was so great that you endured the pain and agony of crucifixion for us so that we can receive forgiveness for our sins, even though you were without sin.

This knowledge and assurance gives us confidence to turn to you in prayer asking for your help as we try to support those in need across the world. We think of those struggling to find food, comfort and safety in our own country and the whole world. We think of those who are ill, lonely, sad and bereaved. Help us to follow your example of unfailing love and kindness.

We remember those who will celebrate their birthday in May:

Ann Carsons   Eleanor Farrer   Irene Impett   Diana J. Jones  
Elspeth Julian   Karen Lane   Debbie Lloyd  
Charles Farrar   Graham Jones   Gordon Waller

**We wish them happiness and God's blessing on their special day**

Finally we pray for ourselves. Help us to listen to your voice which is guiding us and asking us to continue the example you set for us when you lived amongst us.

Lord we ask that in your mercy, you hear our prayer.

We ask all these things in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Amen



# Church Social Events

## dates for your diary

Following the Chinese Food and Games Evening in March the Worship & Fellowship Committee has arranged the following social calendar for the rest of the year. There will be a nominal charge to cover food costs, and names will be collected nearer each event.

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May at Heather Cann's  
– Pizza & Quiz 6:30 for 7:00

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> July at Audrey Williams'  
- Afternoon Tea 2:30pm

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> Sept at Tim & Karen Lane's  
- Wine & Cheese Evening 7:00

Sat. 22<sup>nd</sup> November at Graham & Valerie Jones'  
– “Pudding Evening” 6:30 for 7:00



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## Christian Aid Week 11th - 17th May

St Peter's have arranged the following events to mark Christian Aid Week. It's the charity's 80th Anniversary this year.

- All-age service on Sunday 11th May at 10.30 am
- Quiz night on Thursday 15th May at the Village Club (Tickets required in advance from St Peter's Parish Office from the start of May).

All are welcome to join in, and we'll have donation envelopes at the back of our church for anyone wanting to contribute.

Further info: Steve Oliver ([steve.oliver3@ntlworld.com](mailto:steve.oliver3@ntlworld.com))



## Thursday Morning House Group



The group meets on alternate Thursdays. We meet at 10.30am for cake and a cuppa, followed by a time of fellowship, usually finishing around 12 Noon. Venues vary.

This month we conclude our three-part Series looking at **The Bible**

- **Thurs 8<sup>th</sup> May** - "The Old Testament" - at the home of Pat & Roger Bolton
- **Thurs 22<sup>nd</sup> May** - "The New Testament" - at the home of Roger Hulme

For any further details about the group, including venues, please contact Roger Bolton, directly, or via the church email. All are warmly welcome to join us for any of the sessions. Please bring a Bible.

***Forward Notice:** Meetings in June will combine with the weekly series during Bible Month*

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## COFFEE MORNINGS

Our church coffee mornings are held in the Village Hall on the last Saturday of the month (excepting June and December), from 10am - 12 Noon. If you've not yet joined us you can be sure of a friendly welcome, a shared cuppa, and plenty of stalls to browse. We ask just £2 entrance which includes your refreshments. Proceeds from the current one on 26<sup>th</sup> April will go to '**Methodist Women in Britain**', while on 31<sup>st</sup> May we will be supporting '**Christian Aid**'.



***We hope to see you!***

## ***Time Out Café***

Prestbury Methodist Church has a proud history of reaching out to the local community, such as the monthly Coffee Mornings, the Faith Lunch, Women's Wellbeing and children's events such as Pancake Mania and Messy Church. We also offered the Dementia Café which only had mixed success.

The 'Pop Up Café' during the Covid restrictions was a great success so a team met to discuss something to reach out to our community which would offer the opportunity to come for a chance to chat, play board games etc and enjoy tea, coffee and cake. We decided to call it 'Time Out' (from the daily routine).

We ordered a banner and flyers in order to advertise it as much as possible and felt quite optimistic!

We have had 3 'Time Out' Cafés and that optimism has proved to be unfounded – no one came to the first session, only one person from one of the other churches in the circuit to the second and no-one to the one we held in April. No-one, other than the organising team, came from our church. This tells us that the need is not there.

It must be said that the team enjoyed the time they spent together in those 3 sessions, including playing backgammon on one occasion! However, each of that team already commit a lot of their time supporting other outreach activities in the church. Therefore, we suggest that we take down the banner and announce that '**The Time Out Café**' has closed.

I think all will agree that thanks must go to the team who tried so hard to reach out to our Church and local community.

Joan Pritchard on behalf of the rest of the 'team' - Heather Cann, Jo Nadin, Isabel Jones, Sandra Bruce and Elspeth Julian.

## ***Easter Offering Service***

Methodist Women in Britain Easter offering Service will be held at Macclesfield Methodist Church on Sunday. May 11th at 4.30pm. Refreshments will be served from 4pm

## Well Done, Heather!

It was wonderful to witness Heather Cann being presented with a Community Award by the High Sheriff of Cheshire at the Macclesfield Mayor's Prayer Breakfast in March. Clare Hayward MBE awarded Heather and 2 other amazing ladies with awards; for Heather it was well-deserved recognition for her huge contribution to our community over several decades, including through her service to Girl Guiding, the Methodist Church (at Bollington, here at Prestbury, and at Circuit level), and to Hope in North East Cheshire, for whom she has taken up the role of Financial Controller. And in many other ways also, I'm sure.

It was also great that Heather's daughter, Melissa, was there to see the award being given.

Many, many thanks for all you do, Heather - you are much appreciated and much loved.

The Macclesfield Mayor's Prayer Breakfast has been an annual event for the last 18 years, organised by Hope in North East Cheshire on behalf of the Mayor.

Steve Oliver

**TABLETOP  
SALE**

1ST GAWSWORTH GIRLS' BRIGADE  
**SATURDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2025**  
**10-12PM**  
Gawsworth Scout Hall, Church Lane, SK11 9QY

Tables  
£10

To book a table, please contact  
Carolyn on:  
07599 136549 or  
carolynboden@gmail.com

Raising funds to attend the  
International Conference of Girls' Brigade 2026  
in the Cook Islands



# Bible Month June 2025

## The Gospel of St. John



During June we shall be following the Methodist Church scheme for Bible month, looking this year at John's Gospel. There will be four Sundays of themed preaching & worship:

*June 15<sup>th</sup> John:1 "Embracing God and all reality"*

*June 22<sup>nd</sup> John:2-12 "Signs, conversations and controversy"*

*June 29<sup>th</sup> John:13-17 "Jesus' discipleship course"*

*July 6<sup>th</sup> John 18-21 "The hour", the resurrection and drama"*

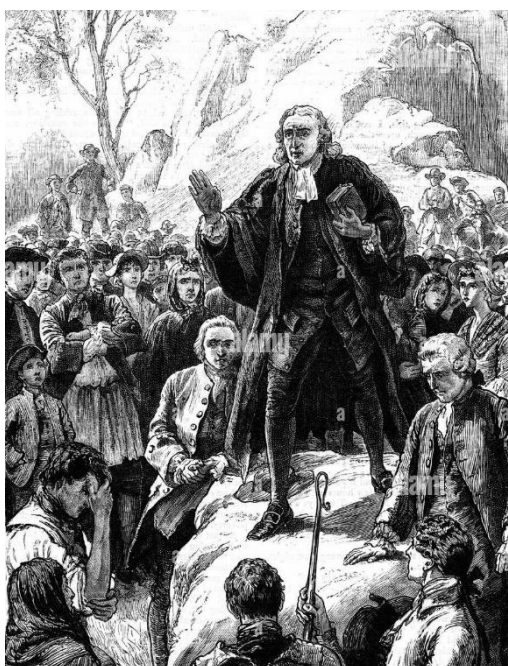
*In support of our Sunday worship there will be four study groups held on the preceding **Thursday mornings in our Chapel meeting room at 10:30. June 12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> led by Steve Oliver, June 19<sup>th</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> July by Roger Bolton. Coffee will be served. Each session will close before 12:00***

*We hope that these study sessions will enrich the corresponding worship service. No special knowledge is required, all are welcome!*

## THE METHODIST MEMBERSHIP TICKET

Around this time each year the Pastoral Visitors appointed by the church are distributing membership tickets to everyone who has made the commitment to: *“The calling of the Methodist Church to respond to the gospel of God’s love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission”*. This year the cards portray pictures of four heroes of Methodism, for us to remember; Anna Herriman, Sybil Phoenix, Philip Potter and George Loveless. But who are they, and why do we have this custom of membership tickets?

The origins of the Methodist Church lie in the enthusiasm of John Wesley and his friends to enrich the Christian life of ordinary people by supplementing the regular liturgical services of the Church of England with personal prayer, bible study and fellowship. John Wesley preached a gospel of salvation through faith, and reached large numbers of people, but faced opposition from parish priests who felt threatened by his enthusiasm and zeal. Officially he was not allowed to lead worship except in his own parish, and as he faced increasing opposition he felt the need to encourage those who had felt this movement of the Holy Spirit



to meet elsewhere, in people’s houses or outdoors always at times other than the hours of the parish services. Following an invitation from George Whitefield, a contemporary of his in the Holy Club in Oxford, Wesley’s ideas caught on rapidly in the Bristol area, and his outdoor preaching to the miners of Kingswood Chase was legendary. As a result in 1741 the New Room, the first meeting room or “society room” of Methodism was opened in the Horsefair in Bristol. (Restored and open including a very good museum if you are in Bristol) Partly for raising money to build these rooms, it was suggested that the members of the society should be organised into “classes” of

eleven members, meeting weekly for prayer, bible study and religious conversation as well as contributing a penny each week for the building. This was the beginning of the “cell church” structure that provided much of the strength of Methodism, remembering that all members were still expected to worship in their own parish church on a Sunday. It was in this intimate environment that deep Christian fellowship could occur, and within which took place much of the mutual caring and support for each other, for which Methodism is recognised. Each Class had a leader, a lay person, and membership was symbolised by a “Class Ticket” issued each year that reminded

members of their commitment to the Methodist society. It is this ticket that has led to the continuing practice of issuing annual membership tickets.

Now to come back to our four heroes:

**Sybil Phoenix** was born in Guyana in 1927 and came to England with her fiancé in 1956 and was married here. She and her husband George faced the racism that was very common at that time in London. In 1973 Sybil was the first black woman to be awarded the MBE.



Sybil started fostering children in 1961, became a community worker and with support from Lewisham Council began a housing project for young

homeless single women. Sybil was a Methodist Local Preacher for many years and in 1971 founded a youth club for black teenagers in New Cross, London, which she called "Moonshot". Over the next few years it became a community centre for all ages of local black people, offering adult education, a library, dances, a football team, daytime drop-in classes and social evenings for the elderly, but one night in 1977 the Moonshot Centre was destroyed in an arson attack by members of the National Front. Surveying the ruins of all her efforts, Sybil is reported to have said "My name is Phoenix and I will build a new centre from the ashes of this club, so help me God." Funds were raised and the new centre was opened in 1981 by the Prince of Wales. She worked for Methodist Church at the Clubland Church in Walworth, and whilst there set up anti-racism training for clergy to be known as Methodist Leadership Racial Awareness Workshop (MELRAW) later taking its content into several overseas countries. In 1998 she was awarded the Freedom of the City of London and in 2008 her honour was upgraded to OBE.

**Anna Herriman** has been profoundly deaf from birth, a local preacher for the Methodist Church and even plays the electric guitar in the worship band! She tells her story on the Methodist Church website, Stories of Local Preachers and Worship Leaders, here is an extract from that story:

*"OK, what is it like to be a profoundly deaf local preacher? God calls anyone to preach. I suppose the main difference with me is the linguistic and the cultural aspects of it and perhaps experience."*



*I preach in two places. I preach for the Methodist Church in my local circuit. I am also on a rota where I preach for a UK national online church on Facebook called “**BSL Church Worship**” for the Deaf Community, which is wholly in British Sign Language (BSL)... I preach in spoken English for my local Methodist Circuit and I preach in BSL for BSL Church Worship.*

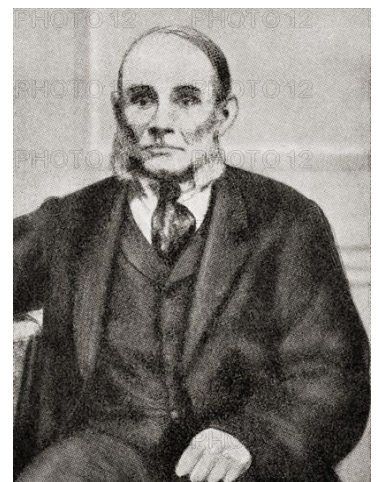
*When I lead worship within the Methodist Circuit, sometimes, I incorporate sign language into the service. I may also include aspects of Deaf Culture into my sermons! Since the start of the lockdowns in March 2020, when we developed a circuit service online, I have been part of my circuit and church virtual choirs. As part of this I began to translate hymns and worship songs into BSL and inserted them into the final worship video. Members of my circuit and church have actually found this quite powerful as it gave a deeper, richer meaning to the hymns and songs. The visual perspective helps to convey the messages in the words.*

*Within worship in person, I have introduced and encouraged BSL in responsive prayers of confession by putting up the words on the screen and teaching the congregation the signs they need before the prayer. I put all my prayers up on screen anyway, in case any member of the congregation has any difficulty understanding my voice. I also use images and display complex words on the screen, during my sermons to help reinforce, what I am saying. This has proved very useful for any members of the congregation that suffer from hearing loss and sometimes miss spoken words. I also provide copies of my sermon script to the stewards, before the service, for anyone who needs them. I have also referred to Deaf Culture within my sermons too!...*

*I regularly attend Local Preacher Meetings. For these, I book two BSL interpreters as the meeting tends to be quite lengthy. When meetings are over an hour in length, it is advisable to book two interpreters in order to maintain the quality of BSL translation.*

*God’s love is for all, I look forward to continuing serve God in my calling to speak of His love for all in the years to come.*

**George Loveless (1797-1847)** was born in Tolpuddle, Dorset where he became a Methodist Preacher and was prominent in the community. He became a representative of a group of agricultural workers who protested against the fact that the farmers in Tolpuddle would only pay 9 shillings a week when the farmers in the Dorchester paid ten shillings. When the local farmers then spitefully reduced wages to 7shillings George formed a “Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers”, but



although trade unions were not illegal in 1833 George and five colleagues, including his brother, brother-in-law and nephew, were found guilty of administering unlawful oaths which was forbidden. All six were sentenced to seven years transportation to Van Diemen's Land in Australia, and became known as the Tolpuddle Martyrs. They were to change the whole matter of trade union law, because in 1834 a group of over 50,000 marched in London to protest, and as a result in March 1936 the Tolpuddle Martyrs were granted a full pardon. After returning to England George and his family emigrated to Canada and settled on a farm in London Ontario. He died in 1874 and is buried in Siloam cemetery in Ontario alongside one of his fellow martyrs Thomas Standfield.

**Rev. Dr Philip Potter**, who was born on 19 August 1921, led the World Council of Churches (WCC) from 1972 to 1984, a time of global religious and socio-political change. The first WCC general secretary from the global South, he provided decisive leadership to the Council in this time of change. Born on the Caribbean island of Dominica he worked initially in a lawyer's chambers, then trained for the Methodist ministry in Jamaica and later in Britain. He then worked as a Methodist missionary in Haiti and for the Methodist Missionary Society in London.



From the WCC's founding assembly in 1948 where he addressed the assembly on behalf of the youth delegates, through his work as a staff member in the WCC youth department and later as director of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, before he became WCC general secretary, Philip Potter was a pivotal figure in the ecumenical movement

After leaving office as General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, he moved back to the Caribbean to work as a lecturer and university Chaplain until 1990. He died on 31 March 2015 at the age of 93. The current acting General Secretary of the WCC said at the time

*"We particularly remember Philip Potter's unceasing support for women in leadership positions in the WCC, his statement in 1974 that 'sexism, like racism, is a sin,' and the leadership that led to the study and world conference on the Community of Women and Men in the Church. Above all, however, we remember Philip Potter's love for the Bible, and the biblical exposition that often formed the core of his reports to the WCC governing bodies"*

**The Methodist Class tickets** remind all members of the Methodist Church of their calling by God, which they accept by entering into membership. The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission. Our heroes above have shown this commitment not only to worship but also to service. Every year we are reminded on this simple card of our promise:

"As a member of the Methodist Church I am called to:

- \* **Worship** within the local church, including regular sharing in Holy Communion, and through personal prayer.
- \* **Learning and caring**, through Bible study and meeting for fellowship, so that I may grow in faith and support others in their discipleship.
- \* **Service**, by being a good neighbour in the community, challenging injustice and using my resources to support the Church in its mission in the world.
- \* **Evangelism**, through working out my faith in daily life and sharing Christ with others."

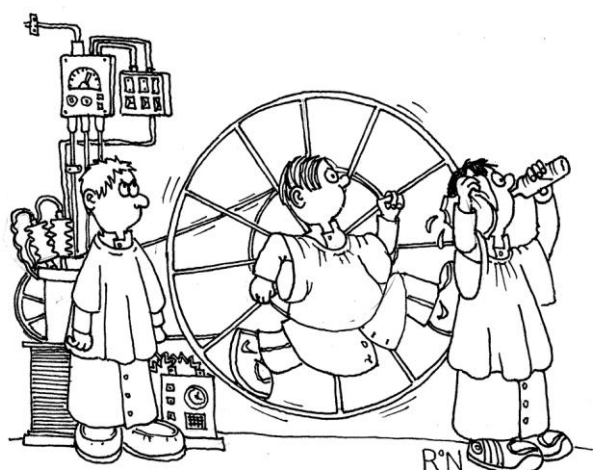
Membership is a formal step because that ensures we make a serious and public commitment to rise to our calling. It is analogous to Confirmation in the Church of England, and indeed those who have been confirmed or received into membership of a different denomination can be received by transfer, although even just a transfer could be made richer by gaining more understanding of the distinct emphases and special history of Methodism. Ministers are usually happy to offer brief sessions for anyone on this topic before publicly receiving anyone into membership.

The quotation from scripture on the 2024/25 class ticket is from Isaiah 1: 17

***"Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed"***

That pretty much sums up the mission of our church as shown in the lives of these four truly amazing heroes of Methodism.

Roger Bolton



*When the solar panels weren't working,  
there was Plan B*

# What's On in May

|                                        |                   |                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Every Tues                             | 10:00am           | Cancer Help Centre                                                             |
| Every Weds                             | 7:30pm            | Prestbury Choral Society                                                       |
| Sat 26 <sup>th</sup> April             | 10:00am - 12 Noon | Coffee Morning in the Village Hall in aid of Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB) |
| Sun 27 <sup>th</sup> April             | 10.30am           | Morning Worship led by John Morrell                                            |
| Thur 1 <sup>st</sup> May               | 7pm               | Women's Wellbeing                                                              |
| Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> May                | 10:30am           | Morning Worship led by Richard Baker                                           |
| Thur 8 <sup>th</sup> May               | 10.30am           | Thursday Morning House Group at the home of Pat & Roger Bolton                 |
| Sun 11 <sup>th</sup> May               | 10:30am           | Circuit Communion Service at Poynton Led by Rev Dr Graham Edwards              |
|                                        | 4.30pm            | MWiB Easter offering Service held at Macclesfield (Refreshments from 4pm)      |
| Mon 12 <sup>th</sup> May               | 12.30pm           | Faith Lunch                                                                    |
| 11 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup> May |                   | Christian Aid Week                                                             |
| Sun 18 <sup>th</sup> May               | 10.30am           | Morning Worship led by Mandy Hawkyard                                          |
| Wed 21 <sup>st</sup> May               | 2pm               | Reading Group at Chris Leach's home                                            |
| Thur 22 <sup>nd</sup> May              | 9.30am            | Thursday Morning House Group at the home of Roger Hulme                        |
| Sun 25 <sup>th</sup> May               | 10:30am           | Own Arrangement Morning Service                                                |
| Fri 30 <sup>th</sup> May               | 6.30for7pm        | Pizza & Quiz Evening at the home of Heather Cann                               |
| Sat 31 <sup>st</sup> May               | 10:00am - 12 Noon | Coffee Morning in the Village Hall supporting Christian Aid                    |

Please send items for June's edition of Contact to David Lee by Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> May, or c/o the church e-mailbox [admin@prestburymethodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:admin@prestburymethodistchurch.org.uk)

[www.prestburymethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.prestburymethodistchurch.org.uk)

Please remember to visit the website regularly to find out more, and for updates