

Bangor & Holyhead Methodist Circuit

Sunday Worship Sheet, 12th July 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

Call to worship

I lift up my eyes to the hills—
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth

Hymn 507 O for a heart to praise my God

Prayers of Adoration, Confession & Thanksgiving:

Adoration

The seed of your word scattered on fertile ground germinates, takes root, puts forth branches beneath which no weeds can grow, and then flourishes, blossoms and brings forth fruit. For the beauty of your word sown in hearts and souls and a wonderful harvest to come, for such divine nourishment we praise you, creator God.

Confession

Your word, that lamp for our feet, reveals to us the stony ground we oftentdread upon. There, stumbling in our weakness, we reach out a hand for you to hold, asking simply that you lead us once again to firmer ground, toward that rock upon which our journeying began, where we can rest in safety.

Thanksgiving

Lord, we are truly blessed, we whose hearts have been set free through Jesus Christ, whose desire is to know him more, feel his presence experience life in all its fullness. Lord, we are truly blessed, we whose lives have been renewed by your mercy and grace and, by your spirit, enabled for service, to be your hands bringing healing and your voice bringing comfort wherever there is need. Lord, we are truly blessed! **Amen**

Hymn 397 The Spirit lives to set us free

Readings: Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9

Reflection

Throughout my Christian life I have seen, all too often, people struggling to keep to the way of life that emulates Jesus Christ. They have found it a struggle because the way they have tried so hard has been one with a mixture of success and failure. The failings have been the cause of their depression. When they became followers of Christ they expected more success than they have known. Slapped back by occasional failures, they have said to themselves “What do I have to do to accomplish success and draw others to the Lord?”

On the other hand I remember, from time to time, hearing my grandmother say (when her food did not turn out right) “What have I done to deserve this?” From time to time, I have eaten rice pudding that was not timed correctly in the oven! We do, so often, get very depressed when our efforts in life don’t work out.

Thinking about this and reading our passage from Matthew’s gospel passage in chapter 13, I know how people feel. But if they read this passage correctly and think of themselves as broadcasters of seed. In Jesus’ story he speaks of a sower going out to sow seed. In those days the method was broadcasting. The worker went out with a great basket full of cereal seeds. He would throw it to left and right as he walked. He would understand not all the seed would fall into fertile soil but he would continue in the hope that the good soil would produce a great harvest for the reapers to cut. All such workers did it this way.

They would be used to having seeds falling into footpaths where the ground was hard and would not allow roots to form. There would be areas of powerful weeds that would overpower the new seeds and growth would be minimal if any at all. Stones would be present in parts, and they offered little in the way of sustenance. It was for the harvest in the good soil that the sowers aimed. They never tried to remove the stones, weeds, thorns etc beforehand. I have a garden where parts suffer from the growth of Mares’ Tails. There is nothing to be done to stop them growing. They go back to prehistoric times, so they are here for the whole season. One must simply accept reality. At least that is what a horticulturist told me when I complained about them.

To take on the task of spreading the gospel we have to accept that some of our seeds will die or produce very little. That is the way things are. The important thing to remember is that we should keep on working so that the good soil produces a good harvest. As a former trades union branch secretary, I look back and call to mind the times when I have helped members. Many did not even say “thank you” but you must live with that. I remember, however, finding an excellent bottle of vodka on my union office desk after saving a colleague’s job when he was the object of a disciplinary hearing held by our Chief Executive Officer.

Keep on keeping on is the watchword. Do not give up. God will not criticise when you fail. He will let down his hand and bring you back to your feet. Amen

Prayer of Intercession

You are the light of the world;
dancing beams lightening our drabness,
your brightness dazzling our vision
with a holiness blinding in its beauty.

You are the light of the world;
casting long shadows of coolness
into the tender places of our lives,
offering protection from the fierce glare.

You are the light of the world;
shining with unbearable whiteness
until through the prism of our differences
you splinter into a thousand rainbow fragments.

You are the light of the world;
you are brightness,
shadow,
rainbow,
and with all that is made
we praise you. Amen

Lord's Prayer

Hymn 101 Before the world began

Aaronic 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 507

- 1 O for a heart to praise my God,
a heart from sin set free,
a heart that always feels thy blood
so freely spilt for me ;
- 2 A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
my great Redeemer's throne,
where only Christ is heard to speak,
where Jesus reigns alone ;
- 3 A humble, lowly, contrite heart,
believing, true, and clean ;
which neither life nor death can part
from him that dwells within ;

- 4 A heart in every thought renewed,
and full of love divine ;
perfect, and right, and pure, and good,
a copy, Lord, of thine !
- 5 Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart ;
come quickly from above,
write thy new name upon my heart,
thy new, best name of love.

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)

Hymn 397

- 1 The Spirit lives to set us free,
walk, walk in the light ;
he binds us all in unity,
walk, walk in the light.
*Walk in the light, walk in the light,
walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.*
- 2 Jesus promised life to all,
walk, walk in the light ;
the dead were wakened by his call,
walk, walk in the light.
- 3 He died in pain on Calvary,
walk, walk in the light ;
to save the lost like you and me,
walk, walk in the light.
- 4 We know his death was not the end,
walk, walk in the light ;
he gave his Spirit to be our friend,
walk, walk in the light.
- 5 By Jesus' love our wounds are healed,
walk, walk in the light ;
the Father's kindness is revealed,
walk, walk in the light.
- 6 The Spirit lives in you and me,
walk, walk in the light ;
his light will shine for all to see,
walk, walk in the light.

Damian Lundy (1944–1996)

Hymn 101

- 1 Before the world began,
one Word was there ;
grounded in God he was,
rooted in care ;
by him all things were made,

in him was love displayed,
through him God spoke, and said,
'I am for you.'

2 Life found in him its source,
death found its end ;
light found in him its course,
darkness its friend.

For neither death nor doubt
nor darkness can put out
the glow of God, the shout,
'I am for you.'

3 The Word was in the world
which from him came ;
unrecognised he was,
unknown by name ;
one with all humankind,
with the unloved aligned,
convincing sight and mind,
'I am for you.'

4 All who received the Word
by God were blessed ;
sisters and brothers they
of earth's fond guest.
So did the Word of grace
proclaim in time and space
and with a human face,
'I am for you.'

John L. Bell (*b.* 1949) and Graham Maule (*b.* 1958)