



MINI MACCLESFIELD MESSENGER

1st Issue: 29 March 2020

Due to the current circumstances we can't meet in person, but we can still keep in touch so we plan to issue a weekly 'Mini' version of the Messenger for the time being!

Please feel free to distribute this 'Mini Messenger' to others within the church community who may find it of interest.

A message from the Superintendent

Dear friends,

How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land?

That was the cry of God's people during the Babylonian exile, when their home and everything they knew had been swept from under their feet, when they found themselves in a new and strange place – how can we sing the Lord's song here!? Its overly dramatic to say that we are in the same kind of place, but it certainly feels a little bit that way! Many of us had our days and weeks punctuated by church – worshipping and serving together. The places we had met week by week – sometimes for many years – are not available to us for now. When we come to sing a hymn, we are not met with the voices of the brothers and sisters we journey with week by week. In all this, can we sing the Lord's song?

Yes we can!

Many of you will have noticed that Facebook and YouTube are filled with ministers of all denominations recording themselves offering prayers and words of hope. This hasn't always gone well, one set his sleeve on fire, another activated filters which gave him rabbit ears for the Mass he was celebrating! It isn't easy and we are learning all the time, so why are we doing it? It's not simply because we think you will miss our sermons so much that we have make sure you have them! It's not because we desperately want to appear in your living room Sunday by Sunday! We do it because we want to find new ways of singing the Lord's song and fulfilling our calling.

We can all find ways of singing the Lord's song in these times, because the Lord's song is not just about turning up on a Sunday! The Lord's song is about faith, hope, and love – and each of us can hold onto those things and live in their light. How? Well this is not an exhaustive list but make space to worship and to pray, use technology - pray with one another (yes you can do this on the telephone or through the internet - we've tried!!), talk to people, ask how people are, share stories with each other, study the Bible together, remind each other that God has not run away and slammed the door, God is here in the midst of all this! Sing the Lord's song!!

You will know John Wesley's *Directions for Singing*, well here are one or two to keep in your mind!

Learn the tune (*faith hope and love!*)
Sing lustily and with good courage (*don't give up*)
Sing spiritually (*make time for God*)

In these uncertain times God still sings his song of eternal love to us – to you! So, let us respond, and in this strange land let us keep the air filled with the Lord's song!
With every blessing,

Graham

Sunday 29 March 2020

This weeks' worship is led by Helen. Link below...

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f-k0UI0dVgjYXBLEBgm_HdH1OoeNWRmw/view?usp=sharing

A slightly edited version will be on Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/MacclefieldCircuit/>

And Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCh1PS5ox80YSZj71WMDHVmQ>

Following guidance from The Methodist Church and development in Government instruction none of our churches will be open for private prayer for the time being.

Services coming up.....

5 April – Rev Ros Watson

9 April Maundy Thursday service - led by Ros

10 April Good Friday service - led by Graham or Helen

12 April Easter Day – two services will be available led by Graham & Helen: an 'all age worship' with puppets & traditional worship – choose your theme or watch both!

Please keep an eye on your email Inbox.

Children & Families

For those missing Sunday School, or if you know other children who may be interested, the resource from Roots this week is Jesus brings Lazarus back to life. I have found the following You Tube clips for the children to watch.

Clip for toddlers

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

Clip for young children

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dca8SSxXCmM>

Older Children could read the story themselves, if they do not have a Bible at home they can just search it on the internet or even ask Alexa (sure Google will do the same) to open You Version Bible (and the app is free).

There is also an activity sheet and a colouring sheet attached.

Angela

Prayer

Let us pray together

Holy and Loving God, all life comes from you, and in you all things hold together.

As we remember this, we pause to give you thanks and Praise.

As we remember this, we are reminded that you hold the end from the beginning, and that nothing is too large or too small for you.

As we remember this, remind us that as all things are held, so we are held by you, in love.

Help us in our anxious thoughts.

Help us in our day to day lives.

Help us in this time of deep uncertainty.

We acknowledge that at times we are selfish, at times we do not seek you first.

But we know that you are always faithful, merciful, gracious, and forgiving. (Silence)

We receive your mercy and forgiveness faithfulness and grace.

In the name of Christ.

Amen

Members' voice

Lock down in Sutton

(Random thoughts from the sticks 28/03/2020)

There could be lot worse places to be stuck!

Last week was very busy getting information out to members and people who come to the Wednesday Coffee and Chat only to have to change it and repeat the 'phone calls the next morning.

Went to Tesco on Friday, (20th) to pick up prescription. Tesco's don't deliver and I guess all the pharmacies that do are fully booked. We went at the "special time" for vulnerable people. Nothing special about it was 09.00 to 10.00 people there of all ages no obvious distancing markings. The store had been open since 06.00 3hrs before the special time so of course there were empty shelves. Tesco's may be doing their best but at the time it did not feel good.

Saturday the Stewards took small plants to all the households represented at our Sunday services. Very much knock, drop & run! Perhaps a shouted greeting from the end of the path if someone appeared at the door.

Strange Sunday, no dashing around, going through the mental checklists for the A/V Brenda checking the refreshments, almost civilised. We had coffee & sat down to watch the Circuit video. Very impressed and quite a professional presentation – well done Graham and the staff, we are looking forward to this Sunday (29th). After the video we watched a live streamed service from Swanbank Stoke on Trent – search on YouTube. Graham's compared very well with Swanbank who have been doing streaming for some time.

Then it was phone calls to Church Members to see that all was well with them. That was great and the stewards' had good feedback from the calls and thanks for the flowers.

After lunch – no roast this week, a video chat via Messenger to our family for Mothers' Day. They were only in Wilmslow but the Grandchildren were there "helping" our daughter.

This week the weather has been good so we have been able to go for a short walk each day which has been great. Brenda has cut the lawns and started sorting out the garden. We are now starting to pick up on little jobs around the house that have been waiting for ever.

Towards the end of next week I am expecting a new WiFi hub from BT, that will either be a non-event or there could much wailing & gnashing of teeth. Look for the smoke over Sutton on Friday! Notes from a Stewards Meeting are staring at me to be written up - really guilt inducing! I think the items discussed have been well overtaken by events and a very short note will assuage my guilt for not doing them sooner.

We are looking forward to the excitement of putting the clocks forward on Saturday – at least we won't be late for Church on Sunday.

Brenda & Alan Chapman

Could you write the next article?

We are looking to feature a contribution each week from a member of the congregation who would be willing to tell us what they are doing during these strange times – what are you watching/reading/making? Any tips to share with others? It would be lovely to hear from you – please email macclesfieldcircuit@gmail.com

Circuit Facebook page

For the latest information on what is happening within the circuit, follow....

<https://www.facebook.com/MacclefieldCircuit/>

Other important links

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/coronavirus-guidance/>

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>