



MINI MACCLESFIELD MESSENGER

8th Issue: 17 May 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 'Mini Messenger' to others who may find it of interest.

A message from the Superintendent

Dear Friends,

I've written about haircuts, hamsters, and cakes... so today it's fish! Some of you know I keep tropical fish, and Brian lives in the tank in the living room. He didn't actually have a name until I started writing, but Brian seemed to fit, and he didn't complain! Brian is a Yoyo or Pakistani Loach, he's about 6cm long, he used to belong to my sister but when she moved to a new house, he came to me! One of the traits of these loaches is that they eat small snails. Now, you should know snails in the aquarium drive me mad, I think they look unsightly(!) – once they're in they breed very quickly and are very hard to get rid of! So, you can imagine I was glad to have a natural snail eater in the tank, all my problems were over I thought! Then one day I came to look at the tank and saw Brian sitting on the gravel surrounded by snails! He was not eating them, if anything he looked like he was having the fish equivalent of a friendly chat with them! I was beside myself, I had high expectations and Brian had not lived up to them! Despite that, you'll be glad to know, I am still very fond of him!



In every part of life there are expectations of us, at home, in school, at work, in church, in society and on and on! In this time of lockdown there have been lots of expectations too, and if you are anything like me you find yourself questioning and revising those expectations on an almost daily basis! Is it wrong that some of us expected to be out of this by now? Is it wrong that some of us are finding it very hard? Is it wrong that some of us are enjoying parts of the lockdown? Shouldn't we know what to do and how to make sense of all this by now? Shouldn't we smile and pretend everything is ok? Is it a bad thing that we are connecting to far more people than we have ever done before with the digital worship we are offering? Is it wrong that there are new opportunities for churches emerging in these days? To be honest, the answer to all those questions, I think, is no! But six months ago, I never expected that we would be where we are, I never expected anything like this! So be kind to yourself, accept that this is a mess and don't feel guilty for how you feel, we will come through this together! And yet as all these expectations are challenged, changed and everything is up in the air, how do we live as Christians in all this!?

Well, I can't do much better than turn again to the words from the prophet Micah, "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To

act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God". Micah 6:8. Continue to act justly - think of others, supporting them however we can, doing our part to protect the most vulnerable in our society, and in our world. Continue to love mercy, or as a perhaps more faithful translation says "love love" – celebrate love in the world, be love in the world, don't allow it to be locked down with us! And continue to walk humbly with God – don't rush, don't think we can fix everything, but walk with God as we have done for years, and trust in him.

Expectations are changing all the time, but God is still God, and we are still loved! Hold on to God and what he asks - act justly, love mercy and walk humbly, and we will find our way!

With every blessing,

Graham

**DIAL IN TO LISTEN TO THIS SUNDAY MORNING'S SERVICE - 01625 786346
(Available from 10am Sun)**

Sunday 17 May 2020 – Morning worship led by Graham. Link below...

AM - <http://tiny.cc/easter6>

A slightly edited version will be on Facebook :

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

And Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCh1PS5ox80YSZj71WMDHVMQ>

PM - Each Sunday evening we will offer a short service of evening prayer using Zoom at 6.30pm. Click the link below on a pc/tablet/smartphone and it will ask you to install the app if it is not already installed you can then access the service. Alternatively, you can phone in using one of the numbers below. You will be muted on arrival in the meeting please don't unmute yourself.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88677436411>

Meeting ID: 886 7743 6411

Dial by your location

+44 203 051 2874 United Kingdom

+44 203 481 5240 United Kingdom

+44 203 481 5237 United Kingdom

+44 131 460 1196 United Kingdom

Meeting ID: 886 7743 6411

**Or DIAL IN for the Live Evening Prayer Service (Sun 6.30pm)
by calling 0203 051 2874 or 0203 481 5237
and when asked, input the Meeting ID: 886 7743 6411**

Have you tried accessing the worship services via You Tube on your TV?

It could be easier than you think! Try searching your Channel Guide for 'You Tube' or Sky customers – access You Tube from the 'Apps' section on a Sky Q box
Virgin Media V+ box – You Tube is channel number 198
BT TV – use the 'Home' settings and scroll through.

Once on You Tube, search 'Macclesfield Methodist Circuit'

Services coming up.....

24 May Aldersgate Sunday AM – led by Helen PM led by Ros
31 May Pentecost AM – Two services to be available, traditional worship led by Ros
& All Age Worship led by Helen & Angela
7 June AM – led by Graham
14 June AM – led by Helen – Refugee Week

Keep collecting!

One thing we can't do as part of the online services is the offertory. Our churches still have expenditure though and if you give by standing order, these continue to help with expenses at this time, but if you use the weekly gift aid envelopes or would normally give what you can on a Sunday morning please consider how you can keep doing this whilst we are not meeting at church. Contact your church treasurer – there are options available and they can discuss these including setting up standing orders with you. And if you like to physically put something aside each Sunday morning, why not find a special pot at home to use to pop your collection in each week after you've watched the service?

Children & Families

For those missing Sunday School, or if you know other children who may be interested, this week we focus on Jesus's promise to send the Holy Spirit to be with us and help us forever.

Activity sheets attached.

Mini Messy Church @ Home Live

We held our first Mini Messy Church @ Home LIVE on Saturday 9th May via zoom. We connected with 6 families from around the circuit as well as volunteers from different churches. Altogether we had 15 participants.

During the meeting we allowed the children to talk to us as well as getting them to join in with the sessions. We had pre-recorded items and lots of LIVE stuff including songs, Godly play the lost sheep and magic from Graham.

During the songs, story and magic we muted all participants, but to see the reactions on the faces of the children was fantastic. Especially in one of the tricks Graham did, when 'Wooly' the sheep went missing and it was on his back, all you could see was the children shouting and pointing at the screen saying he is behind you.





During the songs I hope the children were dancing about, unfortunately I couldn't see the children or myself as I was sharing the video of the songs. I hope I did not look too silly dancing!!!!

As you will know at our normal Messy Church events, we have several crafts for the children, so they can choose which they would like to do. We couldn't offer this on the Zoom call, but we all did a craft together, with different variations depending on what craft materials the children had at home.



We over ran a little but as it took 5-10 minutes for people to join, it was all done in an hour. I felt it went very well and was great to see the children and volunteers from the different churches in the circuit. We have also had positive feedback from people who attended the event saying it went very well and the kids enjoyed making the craft and the whole event.

We are going to hold another one on the **20th June 2-3pm**, so put the date in your diary and watch out for the advertising on Facebook.

Here is the link for the Godly play Lost Sheep, you can also find it on Facebook.
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jMgHZfvVegXCtEWBYHHyNUctUPpOCqZc/view?usp=sharing>

Angela



Look out for International Messy Adventure!

Join us on Ascension Day (Thursday 21 May) as we set out on the speediest round-the-world trip ever. To celebrate the amazing international Messy Church community and to bring a little joy to the day we'll be setting sail (virtually), taking off (in our imaginations) and revving our (digital) engines for a whole day of Mess!

Join us on the Messy Church YouTube Channel from 7AM (BST) all the way to 10PM where we'll be journeying through the Bible with worship, storytelling, prayer, food for thought and all sorts of Messy fun. More details on Facebook.

Prayer– in our Circuit Prayer Cycle we remember Broken Cross this week. This prayer has been provided by Anne Fielding

Let us pray together

Heavenly Father, we give thanks for your generous giving, in creation and in the life of Jesus. We thank you for the many ways He reached out to the most needy, befriending and overcoming their isolation, enabling them to live a more fulfilled life. As we try to follow his way, help us to be generous in our giving to those in need. We thank you for the Christian Aid service last week, and for the many communities around the world that are helped by Christian Aid to begin new projects that enable them to provide for their villages.

We realise that the Covid 19 situation this year will prevent us being able to raise money in the way we would normally do. We pray that new ways will be found where we can still help our brothers and sisters in such need across the world. The joy and faithfulness they show even in their poverty speaks volumes to us about their trust in you.

We remember all in our circuit who have recently been bereaved; those who are in hospital or hospice; those who are ill at home or who are feeling the burden of isolation is becoming too great. We especially remember the Church at Broken Cross and all its members.

So Father, be our strength when we feel weak, be our light in the darkness, and may we always feel the closeness of your presence, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

Green Close Church Anniversary

Last Sunday (10th May) would have been the chapel anniversary for Green Close. Here, Steve Sheldon shares an update on the refurbishment.....

Following the flood at Green Close Methodist Church at the end of July last year we transferred our services to Poynton Methodist Church. As our services are held in the afternoon, this fitted in well and we were pleased to welcome people from Poynton who came to join us for our service and the following tea and cakes.

The damage caused by the flood was mainly to the carpet in the worship area and to the boiler which suffered water damage. Methodist Insurers were extremely helpful and quickly arranged for a loss adjuster to be appointed who within a couple of days had a company on site to commence the drying out process.

Green Close has a well in its cellar which is fed by a spring and when the building was refurbished in 1995 a sump pump was installed so under what used to be "normal" weather conditions the excess water would be drained away. In the flood the control float on the pump became dislodged and the cellar flooded although the damage to the carpet was caused through water coming through the air vents and up through the floor in the worship area.

The drying process took some considerable time and the company kept returning to test the damp level before signing it off as dry. Estimates had been obtained and agreed for a replacement carpet, boiler repairs and to have the organ retuned prior to returning (we were advised that the drying out process could affect it).

In November the decision was taken to use this opportunity to redecorate the worship area before the new carpet was fitted and to replace several misted up double glazed windows and install new blinds. The decorating was completed in January, the new carpets fitted in February, the windows repaired and the new blinds ordered in March and then – **CORONAVIRUS!**

We were planning to have the chairs cleaned and setup in the worship area and arrange a working party to clean the kitchen and toilets etc. with a view to being back at Green Close for Easter. Like everything else the plans are now on hold and we can only wait until the coronavirus epidemic is over before we can return to Green Close.



After the flood



New carpet fitted

Members' voice - By Jo Beesley, Macclesfield

Reflections from Lockdown

I don't think that I have ever felt so much part of living history before. Events happen that touch us directly, or indirectly, and we read about significant situations that make their way into the newspapers, or even onto a G.C.S.E. syllabus, sooner or later. In most cases, though, and often thankfully so, landmarks of history happen to someone else, and we just learn about them.

That said, I only have to watch a programme about the 1960s, for example, to know that, at any given time, we are all experiencing an historical snapshot of Culture, of Medicine, Engineering, Communication, Agriculture, Transportation, Education.... Even gradual change is such that any of us can look back, and feel that we used to live in a different time: that we are part of History. We can certainly say that now.

My generation grew up as children of parents who were themselves children during the Second World War. A few years ago, probably spurred on by the fact that his grandparents were now in their 80s, my son was so keen to keep their experiences alive that he set up recording equipment and interviewed them with a detailed list of questions, capturing their reminiscences and reflections of wartime days- of rationing, blackouts, air raid shelters, evacuees, V.E. Day.... These, and many other vivid and poignant memories have come to the fore in the last week, as the whole country has heard about, remembered and paid tribute to the war effort. V.E. Day anniversary celebrations have interlocked with Lockdown, and will now surely form part of our collage of memories from this current time.

With so many people worldwide suffering great anxiety, loneliness, grief, or hardship, Lockdown feels like it will become more than a small snapshot in History. The Covid

19 Pandemic will certainly make it onto G.C.S.E. syllabuses- History, Biology, maybe Geography, but I wonder what the questions and answers will be, when tomorrow's grandchildren interview the older generations in their families, who are young and experiencing it today.

For me, it has been a bitter-sweet time so far. On the bitter side, there have been some lonely low spots, when I would have loved to just share a meal with someone, or enjoy an orchestral rehearsal. A cancelled holiday and other eagerly-anticipated occasions have ceased to matter in the bigger picture. I'm aching, though, to see my parents, and wish so much that they lived close enough for me to play my part in doing their shopping, and to have a legitimate opportunity to chat from the end of the garden.

I have been very sad when several close friends have lost family members at this time, when they cannot be with them, or have the funeral they would have liked, or get together when they most need each other's support. It was agonising, as a mum, to know that my daughter was alone in Birmingham, struggling to breathe, eight days into her experience of the Corona Virus. I felt totally despairing and impotent, unable to get in the car and drive to be with her. For her, the next day was the turning point to recovery. If only that were the case for all.

There has, however, been a sweet side too. I love the peace and quiet, and the consequent cacophony of birdsong. I live on Gawsforth Road, which is usually solidly jammed with traffic bound for Astra Zeneca and Fallibroome in the mornings. I've been getting up early, relishing the blue sky and spring sunshine, walking or doing my weekly flit to the local Tesco Express before the teaching day starts at 09:30. Especially at that time of day, Broken Cross has felt like a sleepy eighteenth Century village: sweet! I've discovered footpaths that I didn't know existed, read books that have beckoned from the shelves for too long, and been able to write to people, and to make phone calls that wouldn't normally have made it past the list of Good Intentions. In place of trips planned for the Easter holidays, I wrote music for my niece's wedding, and sent cakes in the post (until the flour ran out!), and the house had a jolly good spring clean and de-clutter.

I'm learning to embrace daunting prospects! When the lockdown looked likely, I feared that my job as a Piano Teacher would grind to a halt. In the event, however, I was encouraged to continue teaching online- a prospect to bring me out in a rash! In the last couple of months, Technology and Screens have become my friends (most of the time), enabling me both to keep working, and to spend time with family and friends. With weekly family games on Zoom, it feels a bit like Christmas Day every Sunday afternoon!

I expected that teaching via Skype would be a strange, second-best temporary measure. It does still feel a bit strange, but it's great to work with the children in their own homes, to meet parents (and pets!) and to help them to progress cheerfully with one of their usual activities, when so many have had to stop. Many have said that they look forward to seeing a different face (even mine!) and to having this variety in their day working at home.

I sit at my piano, and they at theirs. It's rather like driving a dual control car, and I can demonstrate, without us having to jump on and off the piano stool! The pupils are being wonderful: it's an intense experience that needs a lot of concentration. I find it quite exhausting and have had to adapt my timetable so that I have a short break after no more than four lessons in a row. The children make their own notes during

the lesson now, and take responsibility for adding fingerings and markings to the music. There's no danger of them not taking it all in, when they have written it themselves! In some cases, parents sit in on the lesson, to act as scribes, or just to enjoy watching or supporting. It's a bonus that none of us expected, and I think that the experience will encourage parents who have no musical experience to be more involved.

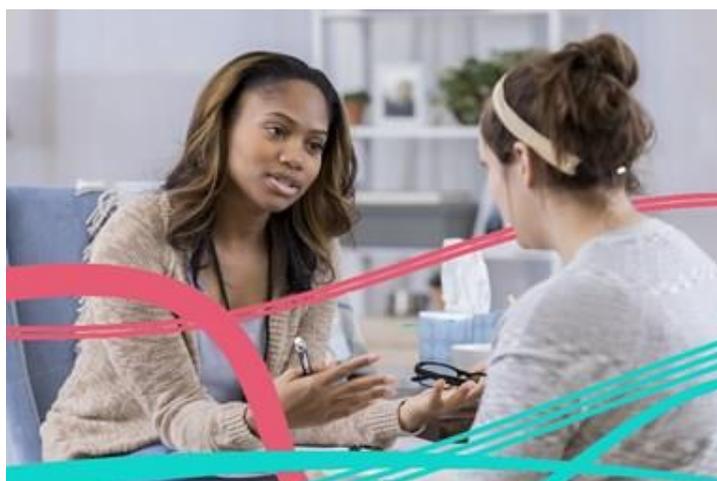
It would be lovely to cherry-pick some of the sweet aspects of being in lockdown and to carry them forwards when it ends. The feeling of care and unity in the church community, and the fabulous services, publications, photographs and communications have been particularly sweet. I believe that we will emerge strengthened, and it will be wonderful to see people again. Until then, my love to you all. I look forward so much to hearing your stories.

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

Year of Testimony: Sharing Our Story

It has been good to share the story of God in our lives with each other during our services this year. We all benefit from hearing each other's testimonies and so we would like to continue this during our online services. So, if you would like to share your experiences of God during this time please make a recording and send it to Graham. Or, if you would prefer, contact Graham and he will record you via Zoom.



A [FREE phone service](#) to hear prayers and news from the **Methodist Church** has been launched.

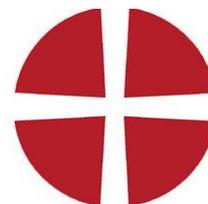


FREE phone lines for prayers and news from the Methodist Church

Listen to a **prayer**: 0808 281 2514

Listen to **news**: 0808 281 2478

Content is updated weekly on Thursday afternoon



A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers

Are you in need of some daily hope during this lockdown? The **Church of England** have a new FREE telephone line for you to ring to hear comforting hymns, daily prayers and reflections.

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>

<https://www.methodistchurch.org.uk/MWoL>

Just for fun!

Bible Word Search

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Gifts of the Holy Spirit are not presents that we could see or touch, but special power to do God's work. Find the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

L B O U Z L Z O S I A U R G E I L Q W A
Q A S C Y Q H U E N Z P Z F U E V M U Z
D P S E C R R E V V L K W D A T V D R X
Z Q R N U L D V A E S T O D E I Q I N M
U Z R C P Q W M N L U F E L M T T T Q X
N R D O M T U Z G C I R V R D Y M H W M
E N T U O E Z Q E C S N W R W D X Y D I
P O Y R D L Q S L H B B G U N D X A D R
G F T A S C U K I S E T J E C K S I X A
X B I G I M K P S T T R G Y T E S E L C
U E S E W M B U E N L O A R N C V N U L
S Q J S L I V M J O F M Y H E W A R J E
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|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| • SERVE | • FAITH | • WISDOM |
| • SHARE | • TEACH | • KNOWLEDGE |
| • PASTORS | • DISCERNMENT | • APOSTLES |
| • HEALING | • LEADERSHIP | • ENCOURAGE |
| • EVANGELISE | • MIRACLES | |

Fancy baking?

If you've run out of flour, why not try our **Orange Curd Cheesecake** recipe for this week, just be sure to allow plenty of time for chilling or the cheesecake will be too soft.

Serves 8-10

Biscuit base

12 digestive biscuits
80g unsalted butter, melted

Cheesecake

350g full-fat cream cheese
100g caster sugar
450g double cream
Grated zest of 1 navel orange to decorate

Orange curd

grated zest & juice of 2 navel oranges
grated zest & juice of 1 lemon
200g caster sugar
100g unsalted butter
3 eggs

Lightly grease & line a 20cm springform cake tin & set aside.

Start by making the curd. Place all the ingredients apart from the eggs in a heatproof bowl set over a pan of simmering water. Ensure the bottom of the bowl does not touch the water. Whisk the mixture well to combine, then add the eggs. Continue to stir as the curd gradually thickens, it will take 20-30 minutes. When the curd is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, it's ready (it will continue to thicken as it cools). Allow to cool completely before making the cheesecake.

Next, make the base. Place the biscuits in a plastic food bag and bash using a rolling pin until the biscuits resemble fine sand. Place in a mixing bowl and stir in the melted butter. Tip into the tin and press down with the back of a spoon, evenly covering the base. Put in the fridge.

Make the cheesecake mixture by beating together the cream cheese and sugar. Add the cream & beat until thick, then gently fold in half the curd. Spoon the cheesecake mixture over the chilled base and place back in the fridge overnight.

Next day, slowly pour the remaining curd over the cheesecake, then cover and place back in the fridge for at least 4 hours. Scatter over the orange zest just before serving.

Did anyone try the recipe from last week or have you been making something else?



Here is a picture of James Walker's attempt at last week's recipe for Church Window cake/ Battenburg!

Please send us your photos of your finished bakes!
email: macclesfieldcircuit@gmail.com

Perspective.....

For a small amount of perspective at this moment, imagine you were born in 1900.

On your 14th birthday, World War I starts, and ends on your 18th birthday. 22 million people perish in that war. Later in the year, a Spanish Flu epidemic hits the planet and runs until your 20th birthday. 50 million people die from it in those two years. Yes, 50 million.

On your 29th birthday, the Great Depression begins. Unemployment hits 25%, the World GDP drops 27%. That runs until you are 33. The country nearly collapses along with the world economy.

When you turn 39, World War II starts. You aren't even over the hill yet. And don't try to catch your breath. On your 41st birthday, the United States is fully pulled into WWII. Between your 39th and 45th birthday, 75 million people perish in the war.

Smallpox was epidemic until you were in your 40's, as it killed 300 million people during your lifetime.

At 50, the Korean War starts. 5 million perish. From your birth, until you are 55 you dealt with the fear of Polio epidemics each summer. You experience friends and family contracting polio and being paralyzed and/or die.

At 55 the Vietnam War begins and doesn't end for 20 years. 4 million people perish in that conflict. During the Cold War, you lived each day with the fear of nuclear annihilation. On your 62nd birthday you have the Cuban Missile Crisis, a tipping point in the Cold War. Life on our planet, as we know it, almost ended. When you turn 75, the Vietnam War finally ends.

Think of everyone on the planet born in 1900. How did they endure all of that? When you were a kid in 1985 and didn't think your 85 year old grandparent understood how hard school was. And how mean that kid in your class was. Yet they survived through everything listed above. Perspective is an amazing art. Refined and enlightening as time goes on. Let's try and keep things in perspective. Your parents and/or grandparents were called to endure all of the above and

.....YOU ARE CALLED TO STAY HOME

Christian Aid Week

Christian Aid Week 10-16 May

Love never fails. Coronavirus impacts all of us. But love unites us all.



<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

Coming up....

Cliff Festival

Cliff College has been hosting a spring/summer festival for over 100 years. This year, Festival is moving online - welcome to Festival at Home!

You are invited to Festival at Home, a free-to-access online festival taking place from May 22nd to 25th 2020.

<https://cliffcollege.ac.uk/cliff-festival/festival-2020>

lots of opportunities for worship and bible study – make a diary note to tap in!



Thy Kingdom come

There was due to be a large public service in St Ann's square, which has been cancelled due to covid19. However, Thy Kingdom come is suggesting a new initiative for 24/7 prayer over the 10 day period between 21st and 31st May by setting up online "prayer rooms" and encouraging people to sign up and fill every hour. The idea is that across all the Methodist churches in the district, with Greater Manchester Churches Together and beyond we would have every hour covered for the whole ten days - with people signing up for hour slots at this page

<https://www.24-7prayer.com/signup/765237> There are ideas for how people might use the hour to pray at this page [https://www.24-7prayer.com/downloads/60%20Minute%20Prayer%20Guides\(1\).pdf](https://www.24-7prayer.com/downloads/60%20Minute%20Prayer%20Guides(1).pdf) as well as some resources from Thy Kingdom Come, here <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/prayer-resources> .

Please get involved as we light up the world in prayer!

Contact Details

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