



# **MINI** MACCLESFIELD **MESSENGER**

9<sup>th</sup> Issue: 24 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 would like you introduce you to Brownie (I know, I have always had a gift for names!). Brownie was made for me by my mum in the deep dark past and has made it through the years to today. He is not the shape he was originally – he was flattened somewhere along the way. His head lolls to the side – it came off and I sewed it back on at some point! He has several bald patches – but that is nothing to be ashamed of! He has a few other flaws, but it seems unfair to list them all! He is not perfect, but he is very precious to me! It often feels like the world we live in tries to convince us that we need to be perfect, that we are not good enough unless our flaws are removed.



Well, our faith says the opposite, our faith says that we are precious to God, we are “fearfully and wonderfully made”. We are God’s creation - as we are, and God calls us to be us! He calls me to be me, and you to be you! About eleven years ago I went to the ordination of an Anglican colleague in a village called Birkenshaw and in the service the Methodist (!) preacher said these words “ God has committed some work to you, which he has not committed to another. Somehow you are necessary for his purposes. As necessary in your place as an archangel in his ... God requires your service for the people around you, that of another will just not suffice”. This is not just true for those who are ordained, it is true for all God’s children! Each of us is part of God’s purpose in the world - even with the flaws we might have!

This Sunday is Aldersgate Sunday, when we remember John Wesley’s strangely warmed heart, a moment when Wesley was assured of God’s love for him. However, he was not perfect before he came to Aldersgate Street that night on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May. He had made a mess of things in Georgia, particularly over his infatuation with Sophia Hopkey, when she married another man, he rebuked her publicly and refused to give her communion! After his Aldersgate experience, he was not perfect either! He was often called “Pope John” because of how tightly he tried to control everything about the Methodist movement! He could be difficult to work with and live with! He was not perfect, but when his heart was strangely warmed, he began to find his place in Gods purpose in the world – with all his flaws!

John Wesley believed in “Christian perfection” and that it was possible to become “perfect” through prayer and study. Very few people if any, however, can claim to

have achieved it! Striving for “Christian perfection” is, I think, about our response to the grace of God, about discipleship, following God and finding our place, rather than perfection! God calls you to be you, even in these strange times, be you and know that you are precious, even if you (like me and Brownie) have a few flaws!



The artist Micah Purnell ran a campaign in Manchester a year or so ago, you may have seen it. At the heart of his campaign was the message that “you are not perfect, you’re never going to be, and that’s the good news – because *you are enough*”! I need to hear that message, I suspect others may, and perhaps you do too. In God’s eyes, you are enough! You are fearfully and wonderfully made.

You are precious and loved. You are part of God’s purposes in the world. You are enough!

With every blessing,  
Graham

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## **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?

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## **Children & Families**

For those missing Sunday School, or if you know other children who may be interested, this week we focus on how Jesus talks to the Father about being glorified and prays for his followers.

Activity sheets attached.

### **Mini Messy Church Adventure ‘Around the World’**

If you missed the event on Ascension Day, visit....

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGJCr5O7LrU3jPc\\_lmTFhOg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGJCr5O7LrU3jPc_lmTFhOg)

See if you can spot Graham!

### **Coming up....**

**Messy Church Live - Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2-3pm.** Please make a diary note!!

**Angela**

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**Prayer– in our Circuit Prayer Cycle we remember Gawsworth this week. This prayer has been provided by Jill Longson**

**Let us pray together**

Heavenly Father we come in thankfulness and praise for your unfailing love. You are a great and wonderful God who loves us in spite of our shortcomings. We remember before you all the members, friends and young people of our circuit churches, praying especially for the frail and elderly. We hold them before you now Lord and ask for peace, patience and fortitude in these difficult times. May the day soon come when we will be together again sharing fellowship with our Christian brethren.

Inspire us to find new ways of serving you in our local communities.

And so to God who is the same yesterday, today and forever be all honour and glory. **Amen**

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## **Frank Bishop reflects on ALDERSGATE SUNDAY.....**

This a significant day in the life of our Church, celebrating the Wesley's "conversion experience". Within days John and Charles Wesley came into a deeper experience of God's love and power, which enabled them to be leading participants in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century revival. This gave rise to Methodism, though John Wesley and even more so Charles had never intended to form a new Church. They desired renewal for their Anglican Church. As the renewal spread, tensions increased with the leadership of the Anglican Church and the Methodist movement became an independent Church. Methodism is the youngest historically of the mainstream Christian Churches, unless you say Pentecostalism is, though this consists of several different streams.

Worldwide, we are a community of some eighty million, one of the largest Protestant Churches and worldwide about the same size as the Anglican Church from which we came. So the growth of Methodism is one of the exciting phases in the long history of the Christian Church. It is good to keep in mind this larger picture, at a time when the Methodist Church in this country, along with other mainstream Churches has seriously declined.

I am not a cradle Methodist. I came into Methodism in my mid-teens through the influence of a lively Youth Fellowship in a small village Methodist Church near Newmarket in Suffolk. I quickly discovered that this was the Church that would be my spiritual home. Here I heard the Call to the Ministry. I have never understood how God could call a shy country lad into the ministry of His Church, but I thank Him for the privilege of being able to serve Methodism. The Methodist people have given me so much. I had always been surrounded by godly influences, but in Methodism I discovered a theology that was more exciting than the narrow fundamentalism in which I had been reared. That theology has been summarised in Wesley's "FOUR ALLS". ALL people need a Saviour. ALL can be saved. ALL can know that they are saved. ALL can be saved to the uttermost. The first three, I would say are self-evident, the fourth is more debateable – can we really reach a state of Christian Perfection in this life? I know I still have a long, long way to go on that particular

journey, and am glad that God has eternity on his side! Meanwhile I am glad that “All can be saved to the uttermost” has inspired our key Methodist emphasis on social righteousness. One of the things that excited me most when I became a Methodist Christian was the bringing together of evangelism and social righteousness – both essential in the Christian Mission.

If what I have said sounds partisan, let me say that I have always tried to be ecumenical, rejoicing in fellowship with other Churches and learning something of their treasures. I hope that this is in the spirit of what Wesley desired for his people, that they be “the friends of all and the enemies of none” Perhaps it is appropriate to conclude with the well known words from Wesley’s journal for 24th MAY 1738 “In the evening of Wednesday 24 May I went very unwilling to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther’s preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death”.

HAPPY ALDERSGATE SUNDAY

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## **Members’ voice - by Ann Eden, Macclesfield**

The WHAM (Winter Hope Accommodation in Macclesfield) weekend nightshelter took place over fifteen weekends this winter. Six churches (Elim Pentecostal, Macclesfield Methodists, Salvation Army, St Alban’s, St Michael’s and the United Reformed Church) each offered the use of their building for two or three weekends. The period covered weekends from 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019 to 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020. During the shelter period:

- WHAM operated on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights; additional nights were hosted on 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> December to avoid guests being on the streets on a Bank Holiday but we were unable to staff the extra days around Christmas. An evening meal was available each night.
  - Equipment was transported weekly between venues by Cre8, who also provided a supply of frozen meals made from surplus food by the Hope Centre.
- Guests:
  - 30 different guests were given at least one night’s shelter; 134 nights’ accommodation was provided in total. This is an increase from previous years where the figures were 20 guests and approximately 100 nights (over 14 or 15 weekends).
  - For the first time we accepted female guests (5 of the 30) – no problems were specifically associated with this.
  - Most guests stayed 2 or 3 nights over a weekend. Some used WHAM on only one weekend, but several were regular visitors; having left or been asked to leave a hostel was a frequent reason for asking for shelter. We had two or three “regulars” who were unable or unwilling to access alternative accommodation. We suspected or knew about drug-related activity among our guests (though not actually at the shelter); a pattern that emerged was arriving to claim a bed then disappearing until about 11pm.
  - Few guests asked for support from Citizens Advice this year.

- As often observed, there were low numbers of guests at the start but 6-8 each night for a period at the end of January/early February. We did not see particularly high numbers at Christmas and New Year.
- We had more challenging incidents this year than in previous years, but increasing experience among our volunteers and an excellent response from Emergency Services when they were called (four times) meant that these were dealt with effectively.
- **Volunteers:**
  - 129 Volunteers have helped staff the Shelter. They represent many HOPE in NEC churches, with particularly good numbers from Macclesfield Methodists, St Albans, Salvation Army and St Michael's. We also have volunteers without known church connections.
  - Although sometimes late in the week, we have filled all shifts except for the ones in Christmas week. This tendency for volunteers to leave it late before committing can make it stressful for the coordinator.
  - Training sessions are provided for volunteers, with additional training for shift leaders (who must be members of a HOPE church), and in Emergency First Aid. All were given a Volunteer Handbook with key aspects of the Policies and Procedures.
  - This year we contacted all volunteers on our list to confirm their commitment and GDPR permission. A recruitment effort in the autumn resulted in a good number of new recruits, so we had a working list of 160 volunteers.
- **Links with Cheshire East:**
  - There have been good relationships and communication with the Rough Sleepers Initiative team at Macclesfield Town Hall.
  - We had plans in place, and an arrangement with Cheshire East, to provide Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEPP), when Cheshire East options were full. Hilda Gaddum has joined the team to coordinate this. The offer was only called upon once and was in fact called off after a change in weather forecast.
  - **COVID-19 crisis:** when the crisis became apparent we moved the shelter from St Michael's Youth Centre to the URC to enable better distancing. Since many volunteers are over 70 or are caring for elderly relatives or themselves at risk, we ran overnight shifts only to minimise the number of volunteers required. The final (sixteenth) weekend was cancelled upon Government advice but guests who arrived on Friday were advised to contact Cheshire East support.

WHAM continues to be an example of Macclesfield's Churches working together to help with a problem which symbolises the broken makeup of much of our society.

### ***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](mailto:macclesfieldcircuit@gmail.com)*

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## 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.

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## Pentecost Photos



Please send us your Pentecost Photos!

Following on from the success of Telling the Easter Story from Home, using items from the home or garden, why not create a scene depicting Pentecost? It might be using items from the home or garden or perhaps a special view. Take a photo and we will share these across the Circuit.

**email: [macclesfieldcircuit@gmail.com](mailto:macclesfieldcircuit@gmail.com)**

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## Community....

### **Cliff Festival - 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

You are invited to Festival at Home, a free-to-access online festival taking place with lots of opportunities for worship and bible study.

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

### **Thy Kingdom come 21<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020**

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

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 is also:-

### **A Prayer Guide**

[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.....

### **Prayer Resources & Digital Family Adventure Map**

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/prayer-resources>

### **The UK Blessing**

65 churches worked together to sing a blessing over the UK, and also to witness to the

current work of the church at this time - with many supplying meals to the vulnerable, befriending those in isolation and working with the NHS to deliver medicines. The message is that church doors may be closed, but that the church is alive and well. There is a news article about the song [here](#) and if you've not heard the song yet, or would like to listen again, you can hear it at [this link](#)

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

### Just Drop In - Staircase Challenge 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May



The Covid 19 lockdown has hit some young people hard – particularly those already suffering with anxiety, mental health problems or in debt. But counselling at Just Drop-In for 18-25 year olds is under threat as fundraising activities have stopped.

Step forward our wonderful supporters who have been raising money to ensure that local young people get the help they need. Since our Staircase challenge appeal was launched on 1st May 2020, Just Drop-In friends have raised enough money to pay for

70 counselling sessions. The challenge is still running and Just Drop-In needs your help to keep this total rising so, if you are Stuck at home, Step up for Just Drop-In with the STAIRCASE CHALLENGE!

[Click here to watch our staff team completing their #staircasechallenge](#)

'Climb' a local landmark by doing the equivalent distance on your own stairs.

Please help us by raising just £30 for one counselling session, or £360 for a course of 12. Choose a peak - or do all four - before 31 May:

Shuttlingsloe, 506m (664 steps/50 flights)

Tegg's Nose, 380m (500 steps/38 flights)

Bosley Cloud, 343m (450 steps/35 flights)

White Nancy, 280m (367 steps/28 flights)

Go to <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/JDIstaircasechallenge> to set your challenge

[click](#) to create your own fundraising page and ask friends and family to donate OR make a one-off donation after you've completed the challenge.

### Help for Unpaid Carers

Cheshire East Council has launched a service that offers support to thousands of unpaid carers across the borough during the current Covid-19 crisis.

[https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/council\\_information/media\\_hub/media\\_releases/council-continues-to-support-unpaid-carers-during-covid-19-crisis.aspx](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/council_information/media_hub/media_releases/council-continues-to-support-unpaid-carers-during-covid-19-crisis.aspx)

An unpaid carer is described as someone who provides their time and support, without payment, to family or friends who couldn't manage without help. This could include day to day living tasks or personal care to a family member or friend such as helping them to wash, get dressed, eat, taking them to appointments, or keeping them company when they feel lonely or anxious.

Unpaid carers also include many children and young people who look after a brother, sister, parent or grandparent who has a disability or illness.

Working together with several organisations, including the Cheshire East Carers' Hub, and the charity Crossroads Together, the service offers ongoing support and reassurance for carers, recognising the value and the support they are providing during this difficult time.

**The service includes:**

- *Signposting carers to relevant services to help them in their role, including support for mental health;*
- *Providing information and advice and someone to call in a crisis; and*
- *Referring carers to relevant teams within the council where further ongoing support is required*

Cheshire East Crossroads Together is also offering urgent carer breaks for up to a maximum of three hours, to enable the carer to take some time out at this difficult time.

Carers can contact the hub by calling 0300 123 5034 or completing the 'I need help' section at [cheshireeast.gov.uk/peoplehelpingpeople](http://cheshireeast.gov.uk/peoplehelpingpeople)

**Just for fun!** This week's challenge – Sudoku

5	4			7	6	1	8	
7							2	
		6	1	2	4	7	3	
		4	8			9		
2				3				1
		8			1	3		
	6	1	5	4	9	2		
	5							6
	2	9	7	6			1	3

## Fancy baking?

Happy Birthday to you.... Queen Victoria was born on 24 May 1819 and whilst it is well known the Victoria sponge was named after her, Graham has already done that one! So, this week's recipe celebrates her other legacy to the food world's vernacular: the Victoria plum. The bright red fruit was discovered by a Sussex gardener the year the monarch was crowned so he named it after her.

### Plum, Lemon and vanilla cake

- 150g unsalted butter, softened
- 175g caster sugar
- 2 medium eggs
- 175g self-raising flour
- Grated zest of 1 lemon
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 125ml buttermilk or full fat milk
- 1 x 570g can plums in syrup, drained
- 15 – 20g flaked almonds

Preheat the oven to 180 degrees Celsius/160 degrees Celsius fan/gas 4. Grease a 20cm springform cake tin and line the base.

Beat the butter and sugar using a wooden spoon or electric whisk, until light and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition, and adding a tablespoon of flour with the final egg to prevent curdling.

Mix in the lemon zest and vanilla, then gently stir in the buttermilk and remaining flour until evenly combined. Do not overmix. Spoon the batter into the prepared tin and smooth the top.

Arrange the plums on top, cut-side up, then scatter over the flaked almonds. Bake for 50-60 minutes, until the cake is set and golden; the fruit will sink into the cake as it cooks.

Leave to cool in the tin for 20 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack to cool completely.

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## Tell us about your bakes & share your favourite recipes



Thanks to Margery Wilson from Macclesfield for sharing her picture of the Orange Curd Cheesecake from last week. It looks great and Margery tells us it was very tasty.

**Please send us your photos of  
your finished bakes!  
email:  
[macclesfieldcircuit@gmail.com](mailto:macclesfieldcircuit@gmail.com)**

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## SERVICE LINKS & CONTACTS

### Sunday 24 May 2020 – Aldersgate Sunday

**AM** - Morning worship led by Helen.

**WATCH ONLINE** .....<http://tiny.cc/easter7>

You don't have to download this link, it will play in the browser.

**LISTEN.....DIAL IN - 01625 786346 (Available from 10am Sun)**

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

**YOUTUBE.....**: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCh1PS5ox80YSZj71WMDHVmQ>

**PM** – Live Evening Prayer Service at 6.30pm

**JOIN ONLINE.....** 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

**LISTEN.....DIAL IN - 0203 051 2874 or 0203 481 5237 & and when asked, input the Meeting ID: 886 7743 6411**

#### Services coming up.....

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

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

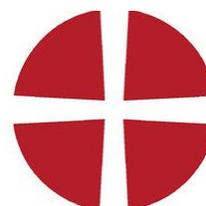


FREE phone lines for prayers and news from the Methodist Church

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>

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## Contact Details

### ***For Children & Families***

Angela Bourne

Tel: 07901 777506

Email: [methodistfamilies@gmail.com](mailto:methodistfamilies@gmail.com)

### ***Ministers***

Rev Graham Edwards

Tel: 01625 426051

Email: [graham.edwards@methodist.org.uk](mailto:graham.edwards@methodist.org.uk)

Rev Helen Byrne

Tel: 01625 572259

Email: [helenmethodist@gmail.com](mailto:helenmethodist@gmail.com)

Rev Ros Watson

Tel: 01625 872060

Email: [ros.watson@methodist.org.uk](mailto:ros.watson@methodist.org.uk)

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