



MINI MACCLESFIELD MESSENGER

19th Issue: 2nd August 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,

A couple of Christmases ago I was given a very special present - a build you own snowman kit. To make the snowman you don't have to go outside, you don't have to find a carrot, you don't even need snow, it's all provided for you! Over the years I have made lots of 'snowpeople', sometimes when I am wrestling with a sermon that won't write itself, sometimes when I'm on the phone, and more recently when I'm using Zoom! I have discovered that there is something quite therapeutic about modelling a snowperson! There

is, however, a problem. As you can see from the pictures the snow people don't stay like snowpeople for very long! After about 5 minutes they revert to a pool of white slimy stuff! If I want my creation to stay as snowmen, snowwomen, snow children or whatever it is, I have to keep reforming and reshaping it again and again – it is a never-ending process!



That isn't a bad thing though, the ability to reshape something is useful, it can correct mistakes or create a new feature (a bigger head on some of my snowpeople perhaps!), it means something can be changed again and again. Earlier this year I watched *The Great Pottery Throwdown*, which is a bit like the *Great British Bake Off* but with potters!

There were some amazing creations made with wet clay, but sadly sometimes when the clay was dried or fired the creations broke and could not be fixed. When the clay is hardened, it can't be moulded or shaped any more, but when it is still pliable the possibilities are endless.

The image of the potter and clay is often used in the Bible, in Jeremiah “Behold, like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel”. In Isaiah “But now, O Lord, You are our Father, we are the clay, and You our potter; and all of us are the work of Your hand”. The work of God the potter is never complete, he continues to shape us and mould us as long as we allow him to. He shapes and moulds the church of which we are a part as long we allow him to. If we don’t allow God to keep reforming and reshaping us, we end up like one of my melted snowmen – useless and shapeless! If we allow God to hold us and shape us, who knows what we may become. God knows each one of us, and will shape us to share his love in the world – and in that process we find the freedom to be who we are created to be.



In the next few weeks and months, we might find God’s shaping of us, and his church, a strange and challenging thing, but we are called to trust in the hand of our creating, loving, saving, God. Whatever may come, we make our prayer:

*Spirit of the living God,
Fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mould me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God,
Fall afresh on us.*

With every blessing,
Graham

We are always pleased to receive articles for mini messenger and these are the words and views/ comments of the authors themselves. They may or may not represent the views of the Macclesfield Circuit of the Methodist Church.

Please keep collecting!

As our church buildings aren’t open just yet and gatherings aren’t permitted, the letting income that is normally received just isn’t coming in. Additionally, no Church service means no collection taken so each and every Church Treasurer is doing everything they can to try balance the books!

Many expenses still remain though, all Churches have a commitment to pay monies every quarter into circuit funds so that Methodism can continue to function nationally, ministers’ stipends can be paid and manses kept in good order. Church assessments are set to increase from August, everything agreed before we’d heard of ‘lockdown’.

We can all do our bit to help however.

If you haven't already, why not set up a regular Standing Order? If you've been putting something aside each week, then maybe it's time to 'empty the pot' and pass this on? And of course, don't forget to Gift Aid if you can - it's worth an extra 25% from HMRC for your church.

Finally, if you're in the fortunate position where lockdown has saved you some money – Less petrol/car maintenance; Dining in instead of dining out; No more day trips/cinema/theatre visits; Online newspaper subscriptions rather than more expensive hard copy? Then why not make a 'one off' donation to your church instead?

Your church Treasurer can let you know how best to do this – they'd be delighted to hear from you!!!.

Children & Families

For those missing Sunday School, or if you know other children who may be interested, Roots have released a resource for the summer called 'Summer Club' which is aimed at the whole family to complete activities during the week however it fits in with them. This week's focus is '**The hour is late, Matthew 14: 13-21**'.

In a dramatically political atmosphere, Jesus organises a meal for a multitude in the wilderness as a sign of compassion, and a lesson to the disciples that they need to look around them, see the need and meet it.

This week's resources explore: bringing people together; the need to share while there is still time.

Full details attached.

Angela

Prayer– in our Circuit Prayer Cycle we remember Poynton this week. This prayer has been provided by Stephen Hughes.

Holy God,

It is very nice to be here. Thank you.

In lots of ways the place is great. I do like the warmth and light of the sun. I really like the scenery, the colourful growing stuff and lots of the other critters that move around. I do like the order of the place. Some of the laws are really clever. As the creator and ruler of constant energy, cheers. You said, 'Love,' Wow!

I am a far from perfect re-creation and I want to say I am sorry for last week's screw-ups and any I have missed before. Please forgive me. I'd also like to apologise on behalf of some of the groups to which I belong: men, women, children, the old, the young, the privileged, the prejudiced, the careless, the selfish, the greedy and the not-bovered. There are others. Sorry.

For the things that matter to me, I thank you. I won't list everything, but you know how much my friends and family matter to me, the foods I like most and the joy I have when things work out right. Thanks especially for being with me and welcoming me with your love. Thanks we can now plan for re-opening church buildings and we

can plan for rebuilding the church with new folk joining in. Thank you.
Some of us shout for attention. Some of us haven't the courage to ask. Some of us might struggle to imagine you paying heed. Nevertheless, here goes: we ask for your blessing, your Holy Spirit and for time with you.
We promise to make good use of blessings you give - we hope to do good things and want to make you happy.
Amen

Members' voice - by Stephan and Christine Rudolfer, (Green Close)

Surprise encounter with God

In the 16th issue of the Mini Macclesfield Messenger, Graham posed two questions, one of which was, "What are we looking for?" His answer was that we are looking for an **encounter with God**, to meet with God and know his presence – to be comforted, encouraged, inspired, and even challenged.

"What are we looking for?" Is it that we are so desperate for SOME COMFORT, no matter where or from whom it comes? In our confused state of mind, we are often totally incapable of perceiving the ONLY ONE who can free us from despair. He always **surprises** us, and He has **no favourites!**

This is what we want to illustrate in the rarely-mentioned story of **HAGAR**. Who was Hagar? Hagar was the Egyptian slave of Abraham and Sarah, first mentioned in Genesis 16.

God had promised Abraham that he would have many descendants. By that time, Abraham was already 75 years old and Sarah was well beyond child-bearing age. **Ten years after** God's promise to Abraham, there was still no sign of a child. We can only try to imagine Sarah's shame at being barren. So she thought she would give God a hand, and made use of the Middle Eastern custom of giving her maidservant to her husband to bear him a child.

After Hagar became pregnant, she started to despise her mistress. Indeed, the mistress-servant relationship was now reversed, on account of the servant being the child-bearer. The atmosphere in Abraham's household must have been sheer hell. In her bitterness, Sarah treated Hagar so harshly that she ran away, not knowing where to go.

Hagar was to experience an amazing encounter. She was confronted by an **ANGEL OF THE LORD!** This is the **first time** in the Bible that God appears in that way. (Angels were usually seen as **messengers** from God, not as God Himself.) The Angel of the Lord told Hagar to leave the wilderness and return to her mistress, with the promise that He would multiply her descendants exceedingly. He then added:

"Behold you are with child,
and you shall bear a son.

You shall call his name ***Ishmael***,

*because the Lord **heard** your affliction.*" (Genesis 16:11)

[Ishmael means *God hears* in Hebrew.]

This despised Egyptian slave – a foreigner – was met by the Angel of the Lord in a God-forsaken place! In amazement, and amazingly, Hagar called out, **speaking directly** to God:

“YOU ARE THE GOD WHO **SEES** ME. I have now **seen** the One who sees me.” (Genesis 16:13)

In fact, the place where Hagar saw God came to be known as *the well of the Living One who sees me*.

At that time, people understood that you could not see “the Living One” and **live**. As an Egyptian, Hagar did not belong to God’s Jewish people. Yet this “foreign” God took note of her and **comforted** her. When Ishmael was born, Abraham was 86 years old.

Fourteen years and several chapters later, in Genesis 21, we see Sarah being blessed with the **promised** son to Abraham, and the teenager Ishmael scoffing at them. Not surprisingly, Sarah insisted that Hagar and her child should be sent away. A new time of extreme suffering was in store for Hagar. She couldn’t bear the thought that her son would die in the wilderness. Their water had run out, and they faced imminent death. She sat down and sobbed.

Again she was **comforted** and received a promise.

... the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven and said to her, “What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has **heard** the boy crying as he lies there. Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for **I will make him into a great nation**”. Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. (Genesis 21:17-18)

Notice the emphasis on **hearing**. As we said earlier, the name **Ishmael** means **God hears**. God was with Ishmael as he grew up. Ishmael lived in the wilderness and became an archer, and his mother got a wife for him from Egypt. (Genesis 21:20-21)

Isn’t it wonderful that we have a God who **sees** and **hears**? We can rest on His loving promise that He will never leave us nor abandon us. All the characters in this story are very flawed, yet God worked out His purposes through these very same flawed people. What a comfort to us, who are also flawed!

*Now thank we all our God,
with hearts, and hands, and voices;
who wondrous things hath done,
in whom His world rejoices;
Who, from our mothers’ arms,
hath blest us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.
(Martin Rinkart)*

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!

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.

Do you watch us on YouTube?

If you use YouTube, we'd be really grateful if you could subscribe to our channel.....
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCh1PS5ox80YSZj71WMDHVMQ?fbclid=IwAR2kh47mOQ5ZdZHpVnLvSFgemJ3TwylalezVvSsywnvucNS569sb1tDhsnl> Just click on the red 'Subscribe' button on the top left of the screen and click 'sign in'.

Or from the TV, on the YouTube page, under 'Subscriptions' click 'sign in'. This will help us get a 'proper' url. (That's the link to the morning service that we include each week.) Subscribing doesn't cost anything as this is a free channel. You can find a Subscribe button under any YouTube video or on a channel's page. Once you subscribe to a channel, any new videos it publishes will show up in your Subscriptions feed. You may also start getting Notifications when a channel you subscribe to publishes new content.

Helen's Blog

<https://questforspirituality.com/>

Community....



Global 'catastrophe' looms as Covid-19 deepens inequality, Christian Aid report warns

- **Prospect of dramatic rise in acute hunger, deepening gender inequality, and disruption to healthcare such as immunisation and maternal and child health**

The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated deep and often hidden inequalities across the world, and could tip over into "catastrophe" unless there is a recovery plan that addresses these inequalities, according to a new Christian Aid report.

The report, ***Building Back with Justice: Dismantling Inequalities after Covid-19***, says of the effects of the coronavirus: "The economic, social and political impacts are only starting to unfold." It adds: "The pandemic has exposed and reinforced deep inequalities that long pre-date it... Without immediate and decisive action, a crisis in

the poorest countries threatens to escalate into a catastrophe that will cause untold human suffering, entrench inequalities and slow any recovery.”

Actions

The report is calling on governments and multilateral institutions to take the following actions:

- **Strengthen essential services**, by rolling out free testing and treatment of Covid-19; protecting health services for non-Covid-19 needs; protecting women from violence as part of Covid-19 plans; and take steps to prevent a food security crisis and acute hunger.
- **Urgently mobilise public finance** for the response to the crisis, by cancelling unpayable debts falling due in 2020 for the poorest countries; preventing vulture funds from exploiting debt distress; agreeing an issuance of Special Drawing Rights at the IMF; and introducing wealth taxes to help deliver the resources that are needed.
- **Promote accountable governance**, by limiting emergency powers to what is needed to halt the spread of the virus.
- **Lay the groundwork for a sustainable future**, by ensuring that any bailouts of business, as part of recovery efforts, are used to promote tax reform, a reduction in carbon emissions, and responsible and accountable business behaviour.
- **An effective global response to end the pandemic**, by supporting efforts to pool research, patents and technology so that all countries have the means to tackle Covid-19; attaching public interest conditions to pharmaceutical research and development; and supporting the WHO to deliver effectively on its mandate.



Public health and social justice organisations have warned that the government’s latest deal to secure advanced supplies of potential Covid-19 vaccines for the UK will fuel the global scramble to hoard vaccines by rich countries. The government’s move to purchase 60 million doses of a potential vaccine from

pharmaceutical giants GlaxoSmithKlein and Sanofi for the UK, undermines global efforts to ensure fair and world-wide access to Covid-19 vaccines.

By locking in advanced deals with the pharmaceutical company, the government is contributing to a dangerous trend of vaccine nationalism by richer nations. The UK is racing ahead, along with the US and EU to secure doses of potential vaccines across different vaccine candidates. These bilateral deals will reduce the initial global vaccine stocks available for vulnerable groups in poorer countries and undermine global efforts to ensure fair allocation.

Heidi Chow, Global Justice Now:

“The government’s race to secure vaccine deals makes a mockery of its own rhetoric on equitable global access to Covid-19 vaccines. This UK-first approach is fuelling a dangerous scramble with rich countries hoarding initial vaccine supplies, leaving poorer countries without. Ensuring fair access is not just a matter of equity but it is the fastest way to end this global pandemic and the government should be

supporting global fair allocation based on public health needs rather than trying to win a self-defeating race of who can hoard the fastest.”

Read more about their campaign:

https://act.globaljustice.org.uk/make-any-covid-19-vaccine-affordable-all?_ga=2.3358262.747520061.1596033540-2030901390.1596033540

Borrowed from Alison Hulse NW learning network who used it at a recent Zoom coffee morning. Thought it would be good to share with everyone.

Ruth Gunning, Macclesfield.

We are creatures of comfort.

We are creatures of comfort.
We like to be safe and secure
to be surrounded by what we know
to be in control
to order our lives in the way that suits us.

We want our journeys mapped out for us
itinerary decided, tickets booked
time of arrival guaranteed
refreshment breaks at regular intervals
and a credit card for unforeseen circumstances.

But Jesus said ‘follow me’ without saying where he was going
just promising transformation along the way.
The Israelites in the desert, rescued from slavery and oppression,
were tired and homeless, hungry and thirsty, insecure and unsettled.
And their minds went back to what they had known.
They yearned for the structure of predictable slavery rather than the broken walls of
unknown freedom.

Liminal space is the place of inbetweenness, of insecurity.
It is the Israelites in the wilderness,
it is Paul blind in Damascus waiting for Ananias.
Liminal space is emptiness and nowhere,
It is uncertainty and chaos,
It is the place of discomfort and unrest.
Liminality is a place of dying and rebirth, of metamorphosis, the place where the
caterpillar spins its cocoon and disappears from view.
Nothing good or creative emerges from business as usual. Much of the work of God
is to get people into liminal space and to keep them there long enough so they can
learn something essential.

This is the invitation of God, to move

- from comfort to insecurity
- from what we know to what we have yet to discover
- from what we are good at to what we might fail at
- from safety to a place of risk

(From Grace, Ealing. www.freshworship.org)

Just for fun!

Encouragement

I L P R O F E S S J I W H I H J K Z H
Q L A V I S H E D C M N N H D K F X P
J Y L V C H O S E N A B Z U E T M C K
K Z A S Q O H Y F E G T R P J Q Q O M
F H T W O R A F Z U E L R L V Y H U X
P K N O W N M Y W D A L N G F F D R C
E U H P E R C O M P A S S I O N I A O
S U R P A S S I N G K H V R F V X G N
P R N Q K P F Q O K P E R J A C H E S
T E A K N U G M G Y M A E M I H C O C
G C K R H R U F L N J R F D T I O U I
T E F P I I A H O L Y T L W H L N S E
A I X C N F R S R C D O E E F D S Q N
F V F O Z Y D B Y J V J C L U R U Y C
B E K N O W L E D G E X T L L E M Z E
J V G I L G K T P K L D I P N N E C T
O V E R F L O W M L T T O D E G D D L
R P R I E S T H O O D H N K S Q P U S
G A I N S D Y S S S L J T G S X Q R U

CHILDREN
CHOSEN
COMPASSION
CONSCIENCE
CONSUMED
COURAGEOUS
DWELL
FAITHFULNESS
GAINS

GLORY
GUARD
HEART
HOLY
IMAGE
KNOWLEDGE
KNOWN
LAVISHED
OVERFLOW

PRIESTHOOD
PROFESS
PURIFY
RECEIVE
REFLECTION
SURPASSING



Fancy baking?

Yorkshire Day is celebrated on 1 August to promote the historic English county of Yorkshire. It was celebrated in 1975, by the Yorkshire Ridings Society, initially in Beverley, as "a protest movement against the local government re-organisation of 1974".

This year's official Yorkshire Day (1st August) celebrations were due to be taking place in Rotherham, but due to coronavirus, a virtual event will be taking place online instead. The event will be streamed online and will feature a variety of entertainment including local poets and storytellers.

Why not celebrate Yorkshire Day at home by making 'Fat Rascals'? This well-known Yorkshire speciality which has been documented since the 1860's, a round teacake, best described as a cross between a rock cake and a scone was originally a version of a Yorkshire Turf Cake.

Use the cherries and almonds to create a 'face' on the top once the dough has been rolled and cut.

Fat Rascals

350g self-raising flour
75g lard or pork dripping
75g caster sugar
115g currants
150ml soured cream or buttermilk
Cherries & almonds to decorate

Preheat the oven to 200 degrees Celsius, 400 degrees Fahrenheit, gas 6.
Sift the flour and rub in the lard or pork dripping until it resembles fine breadcrumbs.
Add the remaining dry ingredients and mix together with the soured cream or buttermilk until to form a soft, but not sticky, dough.
Roll out to about 2.5cm/ 1 inch thick, cut into circles with a metal cutter. Add the cherries for eyes & make a mouth out of the almonds.
Lift onto a lightly greased baking tray and bake in the centre of the oven for about 10 minutes or until risen and golden brown.
Using a spatula, lift onto a wire rack and leave to cool.



Tell us about your bakes & share your favourite recipes

Ann Moss, Macclesfield sent this picture of her bread butter and marmalade pudding. Delicious...



Here's is a recipe from Ann for savoury biscuits which are very yummy and make a change from sweet ones, good for diabetics too.

Savoury Biscuits

4 oz grated cheddar cheese
4oz plain flour
Pinch salt
4oz softened butter
Quarter tsp k n pepper
2 oz chopped nuts

Mix all the ingredients together till it forms a dough, if a bit soft wrap in film and put in the fridge for an hour or so.

Roll out to thickness of a £ coin, and cut out any shapes you fancy, but not too big as they are quite rich.

Bake at about 180C till done about 15 - 20 mins

Cool on a wire rack and enjoy 😊

Please send us your photos of your finished bakes!

email: macclesfieldcircuit@gmail.com

SERVICE LINKS & CONTACTS

Sunday 2 August

AM – Morning worship led by Ros

WATCH ONLINE <http://tiny.cc/trinity8>

The Reading is Matthew 14: 13 – 21

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.....

9 August AM – led by Graham

16 August AM – led by Ros

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

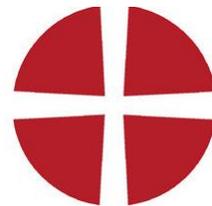


FREE phone lines for prayers and news from the Methodist Church

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>

Contact Details

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Rev Ros Watson

Tel: 01625 872060

Email: ros.watson@methodist.org.uk

Rev Helen Byrne

On sabbatical
