



MINI MACCLESFIELD MESSENGER

21st Issue: 16th 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,

I have an identical twin brother who is ten minutes older than me

I once danced in a tutu in a church

I once co-hosted a church gameshow as "*The Lovely Grahamina*"

I once transformed from a caterpillar to a butterfly with net curtain for wings in a cardboard tube

I once worked as a personal trainer in a gym

I used to have spiked hair

I preached my first sermon in a church when I was twenty-two

Some of the statements above are true and some of them are false – fake news you might say! If you can't work out which is which look in the Mini Messenger next week!

We are becoming used to that phrase - "*fake news*". Like so many things it seemed to start in the USA and then made its way here. It's used when something is genuinely false, but it is also used when people want to deflect something that might be damaging to them or their reputation, when they want to try to convince people that their opinion is the right one, or when people want to dismiss something that doesn't fit with the agenda they are promoting. To declare something fake news is a way of undermining it, or encouraging people to think of it as unimportant and not worth any attention, to claim that something has no credibility. I think most, if not all of us, would say that truth is important – even when truths are difficult or challenging. We want to be people who stand for truth, not lies, or half-truths or fake news. As disciples of Christ we are people of Good News, that is what we hold on to and what we proclaim... but I wonder how easy it is for our message to be dismissed as fake news, not good news.



Faith and action are strongly connected within the Christian tradition. God called the Israelites to be in covenant with him and live by his law, Jesus called people to follow him, not just say “oh, that sounds like a nice idea!”, he sent his followers to “go and make disciples”, St Paul called Christians to be a living sacrifice, James reminds us powerfully that faith without works is dead! That is where the problem sometimes lies, when faith becomes a thing, something we like, something we believe in rather than something we live, when words, actions and faith don’t match up – then people have a genuine reason to declare the message we hold as fake news. If it is really good news, then it is life changing!

None of this is to suggest that as Christians we can’t and don’t make a mess of things from time to time (or more often if you’re like me!), but it is to say that our faith must always be changing us. Faith must always move us closer to God and his purposes, it must always be something that challenges us – our thoughts, our actions, our priorities and our prejudices, so that we see with Gods eyes and speak with his voice of love and peace, otherwise what’s the point?



A few years ago, when Rev Dr Roger Walton was the President of the Methodist Conference some wristbands were produced. On these were the words from Micah 6 – “do justice, love kindness, walk humbly”. This is what God asks of us, this is how we live as people of Good News, this is how

we find our place in God’s transforming work, this is how we open ourselves to life in all its fullness. This is how we dismiss any claim of fake news and hold out God’s Good News to the world! So, let us think, pray, and always ask ourselves what is it we are proclaiming?

With every blessing,
Graham

PS. Many of you will know I had a significant birthday last week, I’d like to thank everyone for their thoughts and good wishes, I was very moved by them.

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 '**Listen and understand – Matthew 15: (10-20), 21-28**'

Jesus has two tricky encounters, first with the Pharisees, then with a Canaanite woman, that seemed to be linked by food. In fact, the link is deeper – faith and membership of God's people – and the outcome of the encounters is something of a surprise.

This week's resources we will explore not being distracted by what doesn't matter, learning from the voice of the outsider.

Full details attached.

Angela

Prayer– in our Circuit Prayer Cycle we remember Macclesfield this week. This prayer has been provided by Ian Wardle.

Dear Heavenly Father God, we thank You and praise You for who You are, our rock and salvation and also our good and loving shepherd.

Thank You that You gave Your Son Jesus to die for us on the cross, that He rose again and is with us always.

Thank you that during this time of lockdown you have been our constant source of strength and peace in a time of change and uncertainty. Help us to remember that You are, and always will be, Lord of all, and please give us the grace and strength we need each day to serve You and to show others Your love.

Lord, let us never forget that You are infinitely more powerful than any pandemic. May we see the growth of Your kingdom spread like wildfire, faster than the spread of coronavirus, as people are set free by the power of Your love, in Jesus name. Amen.

Members' voice - by Sheila Bishop, Gawsworth

THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE SHAPE OF THE CHURCH

Our circuit staff are encouraging us to think about what shape a future church might take- what we would continue, or change, leave behind or take up.

Over the past months we have been so blessed by the Sunday Circuit Services and evening prayers provided each week. These times have stimulated and comforted, challenged and encouraged us to persevere with our faith, keep hope alive and united us while having to stay apart.

We have discovered the ability to make the 'good news' available and accessible, anytime and anywhere. Increasing participation has shown the effectiveness of 'spiritual food on the go' which our food outlets discovered years ago! Then there have been Zoom meetings for Bible study, or to carry on business meetings, run holiday clubs and meet for social gatherings. These things we must retain to reach a wider audience- literally 'broadcasting the good seed.' far wider than in the past.

But what must not be lost is contained in that wonderful Wesley hymn of fellowship 'All praise to our redeeming Lord'. (Singing the Faith number 608). As I read it again recently these words jumped out at me and are, to my mind, still key to the shape of any future church.

'He bids us build each other up '.....'He joins us by His grace' 'gathered into one' 'hand in hand go on' 'concentred all through Jesus' name'in perfect harmony' our fellowship below'

Of course, all these are possible 'virtually' as we greet one another on social media, or as we know that others are worshipping at the same time. But that is not the fullest expression of the 'tie that binds us '. We are physical beings and the nearness of God and His presence with us, is experienced through the nearness of others and their presence with us in worship and fellowship- especially those who share our love of Jesus Christ and strive to follow his way of love. In a future church there will be no substitute for gathering around the Lord's table regularly (how we have missed that!) as a family- the Body of Jesus Christ meeting as generations have done to give God praise and honour and to receive from Him his gracious and unconditional love.

These can be exciting times we have discovered that God is 'doing a new thing amongst us and with us'. let us ask God for wisdom that the shape of the future church may be according to His purposes and design, even if it looks radically different from what we have now.

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!

Contact: Jane 07541 069771

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.

Helen's message

Rev Bob Davies is a supernumerary minister in the district and has compiled this book of stories through lockdown. It includes some pieces from Rebekah and Hannah, and I wrote a piece about being a hospital chaplain through the pandemic.

*To Be Published on 1st September 2020
By Church In The Market Place Publications*

£10 per copy plus £2.00 P&P = £12

LOCKDOWN: LEXICON & LEGACY

An A-Z book with c.100 contributors: observations, experiences and reflections during the 2020 Coronavirus Lockdown

SPECIAL PRE-PUBLICATION OFFER

£8.00 per copy plus £2.00 P&P = £10

All proceeds from sales will be divided between:

- *British Red Cross*
 - *Emmaus (Salford) Homelessness Charity*
 - *Gravelhole Methodist Community Shop, Oldham*
-

ORDER FORM

Please send me ___ copy(ies) of
'Lockdown: Lexicon & Legacy'

Name: _____

Address: _____

I enclose a cheque for £_____ payable to Rev.Robert Davies
This order form should be sent to:
Rev Robert Davies,
38 Sands Avenue,
Chadderton,
Oldham OL9 ONU

Community....



Shoebox appeal – Link to Hope

Last year, around 130 shoeboxes were collected from Macclesfield, Prestbury and Broken Cross churches and sent via the charity Link to Hope to be distributed to communities in Eastern Europe.

This year, due to the closures of the churches, the need to store shoe boxes until collection and ill health issues for both of the organisers – Don Riseley, (Macclesfield) and Diana Jones, (Prestbury) it will not be possible to support the appeal in the usual way. Should anyone feel

able to take on support for Link to Hope, please contact Don or Diana via **Jane**
07541 069771



1ST GAWSWORTH GIRLS' BRIGADE

As we cannot have a camp or sleepover this year, we have decided to take part in "Boycott Your Bed", an event taking part for Action for Children.

On Friday 21st August we are asked to find somewhere unusual to sleep, whether it's outside in a tent, in a den under your dining table or even in the bath! We are then asking for donations for the charity. If you need more information click onto

Boycott your beds or have a look at Action for Children web page.

Would any members from the circuit be interested in sponsoring the girls?

If you feel you can donate contact Carolyn Boden on 07599 136549

Just for fun!

This week....

Sudoku

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

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Parish Pump

Fancy baking?

Afternoon Tea Week is a celebration of one of the nation's favourite traditions. In 2020 it takes place from 10th to 16th August. Whether enjoyed in a 5-star hotel, or as a home baked treat, we British love the combination of savoury and sweet treats, accompanied by some of the 165 million cups of tea we drink each day in the UK.

So, in celebration of the final day of Afternoon Tea Week, why not try some of these delicious scones??

Fresh berry scones

250g self-raising flour	Good pinch of salt
60g caster sugar	50g butter, chilled & diced
1 medium egg	About 100ml buttermilk
50g fresh blueberries	40g fresh raspberries
Extra buttermilk or milk, for brushing	
Demerara or caster sugar, for sprinkling	

Have the egg & buttermilk at room temperature. Heat your oven to 220C, 425F, gas 7. Grease a baking sheet with butter. Sift the flour, salt & caster sugar into a mixing bowl. Add the pieces of butter & rub them into the flour using your fingertips until you can no longer see any lumps of butter, & the whole mixture resembles fine crumbs.

Put the egg & 100ml buttermilk into a small bowl & beat with a fork, just to mix. Pour into the crumbs & mix in with a round-bladed knife to make a rough-looking dough. Add the berries & use your hands to bring the mixture together to make a ball of slightly soft dough, with berries evenly distributed – try not to squash the berries too much as you mix. If there are any dry crumbs at the bottom of the bowl, work in a little more buttermilk. Lightly dust the worktop & your hands with flour. Turn out the dough onto the worktop & gently pat out to about 3cm thick. Dip a 6cm plain round cutter in flour & use it to stamp out rounds, re-flouring it when it starts to stick. Press the trimmings together, pat out & cut more rounds as before. Set the scone rounds slightly apart (to allow for spreading) on the prepared baking sheet. Lightly brush the top of each scone with buttermilk then sprinkle with demerara sugar. Bake for 12-14 minutes until a good golden brown (undersides too) – these scones will take slightly longer to bake than regular or dried fruit scones. Best eaten the same day.

SERVICE LINKS & CONTACTS

Sunday 16 August

AM – Morning worship led by Ros

WATCH ONLINE <http://tiny.cc/trinity10>

The Reading is 1 Corinthians 15: 1 - 11

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

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

YOUTUBE...<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCh1PS5ox80YSZi71WMDHVMQ>

PM – Live Evening Prayer Service at 6.30pm

JOIN ONLINE.... Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88677436411>

Meeting ID: 886 7743 411

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.....

23 August AM – led by Graham

30 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



0800 804 8044

DailyHOPE

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.

Contact Details

For Children & Families

Angela Bourne

Tel: 07901 777506

Ministers

Rev Graham Edwards

Tel: 01625 426051

Rev Ros Watson

Tel: 01625 872060

Rev Helen Byrne on Sabbatical
