



MINI MACCLESFIELD MESSENGER

23rd Issue: 30th 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,



Last week, while I was on holiday, I was staying in a cottage with my sister's two dogs (there were other people there too, not just the dogs in case you were worried!). Billy is a three-year-old Cocker Spaniel, and he gets very excited about almost everything, but most especially about food! When he knows it is time for food he runs round in circles, and "sings" – it isn't barking or howling, it's somewhere in between! I didn't mind this when it was teatime, but he also did it at breakfast time – and his breakfast time is considerably

earlier than mine! So, at about 7am every morning the song would begin! But after a day or two a very strange thing happened, my brain decided to block it out and it didn't hear it again! This isn't the only time my brain has helpfully filtered out unpleasant sounds! In a previous edition of the Mini Messenger I mentioned the rising bell at Cliff College, but I didn't explain the full horror of it. The rising bell was in fact a cow bell, which was carried round the corridors and rung by a responsible student to wake everyone up (at 6.45am!). It had a shrill, piercing sound that I still shudder to think of. What made all this worse was that these "responsible" students learned who really didn't like early mornings, and would ring the bell right outside their door! You won't be shocked to learn that the bell was rung right outside my door most mornings! Every time a term began at Cliff, I would hear the hideous bell for a few days, but then a wonderful thing would happen – my brain would filter it out, and all would be well in my world! But it did mean I was sometimes late (or absent!) from morning prayers!



In all kinds of ways, it is amazingly easy to filter out things that are uncomfortable, things we don't want to hear, things it is costly to hear, things that are demanding to hear. Time after time in the Synoptic Gospels Jesus finishes what he is saying with "whoever has ears let them hear". Jesus doesn't do all the work for those who are supposed to be listening, he says the words, tells the story, but then says now it's up to you to really hear the words, and let them do something in you.

As we begin to return to our church buildings for worship (you'll note I don't say "return to worship", we've don't need buildings for that and we have been a worshipping

people even outside our buildings!) we need to listen and we need to hear. There are some who have been desperate to return, there are some who are worried that it is too early and there are lots somewhere in between. So, let us listen to one another, not simply assume our view is right and shut out everything else, but listen, hear and seek God together.

In his book *Life Together* Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote:

The first service one owes to others in a community involves listening to them. Just as our love for God begins with listening to God's Word, the beginning of love for others is learning to listen to them. God's love for us is shown by the fact that God not only gives God's Word, but also lends us God's ear.



We are called to be a community of faith, a community of witnesses to the love and grace of God, and all this begins with listening and hearing. We listen for God – for his call, we listen to the world – to the cry of injustice and desperation, we listen to each other – to the wisdom of community as we seek to be a people of life, light and hope. Even when it is costly and uncomfortable, even when it goes against everything you want, even when it

is the last thing you want to do - listen, and hear. So, let us open our ears and our hearts, not filter out the things we don't want to hear, but listen as God speaks in us, through us and beyond 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, this week's focus is **'Held together - Matthew 18: 15-20'**.

Jesus says that those who live in a kingdom community should watch over one another in love, gently pointing out when a brother or sister fails to live by the values Jesus teaches.

This week we will explore finding patterns for building community.

Full details attached.

Angela

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

Loving Lord, we praise you that we can still come together as your Church, even though we cannot yet meet in our buildings. We pray for Broken Cross this week and for Whirley Preschool who have been preparing to meet again on our premises, and we pray for all children going back to school again soon, especially those going for the first time. Be with the teachers too during this busy time.

Several of our members have suffered bereavement in the past few months and we pray for them, and all who feel the loss of loved ones. Grant them peace.

We praise you for music and the way it can uplift us and for the hymns which are so much part of our heritage as Methodists.

It's good to hear the adventures of Rev Helen on Mull and Iona. Be with her in her quest for spirituality and enlarge her vision of your will for her and the Church. For Jesus sake, we pray, amen.

Members' voice - by Alan Rashleigh, Poynton

A BOOK REVIEW – perfect for 'Read a book day'!

God and the Pandemic

A Christian Reflection on the Coronavirus and Its Aftermath

By

Tom Wright

Published by SPCK

76 pages

Over the past few months, a whole new vocabulary has come into common usage:- coronavirus, lockdown, R rate, social distancing, and shielding, to name but a few.

Also, we have become accustomed to self-isolating, working from home, the inability to go to places of worship, cinemas & theatres, National Trust properties etc.

On top of all of that we are aware of the conspiracy theorists, that coronavirus does not exist or that 5G is to blame, all sorts of advice about cures from Ibuprofen to drinking (or injecting) disinfectant. On top of that there is the perennial question, which comes round each time there is any sort of sadness or disaster, "Why has God allowed so much trouble and sadness, if he is a merciful God?"

Although this timely book is written about the current pandemic, its application can be for any pandemic or disaster. It does not attempt to review or explain the science, blame or condemn nations, organisations or scientists. It does not dissect political action (or lack thereof), rather it lays out the Scriptural context of the part God plays in concern for the poor, the sick, the outcasts and those without hope.

Tom Wright, a former Bishop of Durham, a noted theologian and author, guides the Christian to come to terms with the Christian response in a world where disasters (both major and minor) seem to be commonplace, and many people are wanting (often unattainable) definitive answers or wanting to lay blame somewhere.

This book is typical of the writings of Tom Wright, in that it is well-researched, cogent and to the point AND is entirely Bible-based. Not only does it provide new insights, but leaves the reader wanting to learn more to enable them to make a real difference.

The book is only 76 pages long, and consists of 5 chapters;

1. Where to we start?
2. Reading the Old Testament.
3. Jesus and the Gospels.
4. Reading the New Testament.
5. Where do we go from here?

So far so good, nothing unexpected, great emphasis is placed by Tom Wright on the Psalms (particularly in Chapters 2,4, & 5), the Gospels (obviously) in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4 the author also expands on a number of passages (Acts 17, Revelation 1,

and especially Romans 8). These build up a picture of the “house” we all want to dwell within. The final chapter puts “flesh” on the building of that house.

In outlining the building of that “house”, chapter 5 is very restrained in that it does not comment on the “diktats” of Governments or of international organisations, neither is there any criticism of rules imposed or advice given. Rather it asks 4 questions of which all Christians should be conscious:

- a) Why must we lament?
- b) How do we talk about God?
- c) How do we live in the present?
- d) How do we recover?

There is no proscription, no bullying or hectoring, no reading of the Riot Act, just a great passing on of wisdom to assist the readers decide for themselves what they need to do in these trying circumstances. Instead of the Riot Act we are referred to Psalm 72 v 1 - 4 & 12 -14, which could be interpreted as wishful thinking, but is the Christian belief expressed simply, as did Jesus, and is what Christians have practised over two millenia. It cannot be any accident that Psalm 72 sets out an agenda that puts the poor and needy at the top of the list!

The book finishes with a flourish, outlining fresh and healing policies across God’s wide and wounded world by quoting Psalm 43 v 3 – 5 – no explanation is required.

Archbishop Justin Welby, writes of the book, “This is classic Tom Wright....It is superbly written, utterly Bible-based, and leaves one satisfied at having learned and yet wanting to know more. I read it in a sitting with pleasure, provocation and profit.” I know exactly how he felt, do not hesitate to read it.

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

Here is my latest post. It's about an amazing beach I discovered on Skye.

<https://questforspirituality.com/2020/08/13/isle-of-skye-a-touch-of-heaven-on-earth/>

I post every week, the main site is www.questforspirituality.com and at the bottom of the screen it asks if you wish to follow the blog - means you get a notification when I've posted something new.

Community....



Situations Vacant!

There are a few vacancies for volunteer Circuit roles. Please talk to Graham if you think you could help. (Contact details on the back page).



MACCLESFIELD METHODIST CIRCUIT
Sharing God's love



Circuit Representative - Methodist Homes for the Aged

This position was included last week but is not vacant, it was included in error.

Apologies to Ruth Gunning, the current representative. We are very grateful for all she does.

Circuit Property Secretary

Are you interested in property? We have eight churches and four manses and would like to appoint a Circuit Property Steward who could help churches with annual

property schedule queries, highlight any other general property matters and help with general queries.

This role has been vacant for quite a time so if you think it's something you could help out with - we'd be delighted to hear from you!

Circuit Secretary

Our current circuit secretary is looking to stand down from the role and we'd love to hear from anyone who may be interested in taking over.

It involves attending the circuit meeting (twice yearly, usually March & September), taking the minutes, sending messages on behalf of the circuit and preparing an agenda.

DISTRICT VACANCY

Methodist International House - Volunteers Wanted

Volunteers are needed for an Interim Management Group that manages Methodist International House in Manchester, a property that is used as a halls of residence for international students coming to study in the UK and also to support people without recourse to government funds or in financial difficulties.

The skills and experience being looked for in volunteers are business management, financial management, human resources and charity governance. The commitment is for one year only and the role should only take a few hours each month.

This is a great opportunity to get involved in business management. If interested please contact admin@mandsmethodists.org.uk

St Alban's Roman Catholic Church, Macclesfield invites....

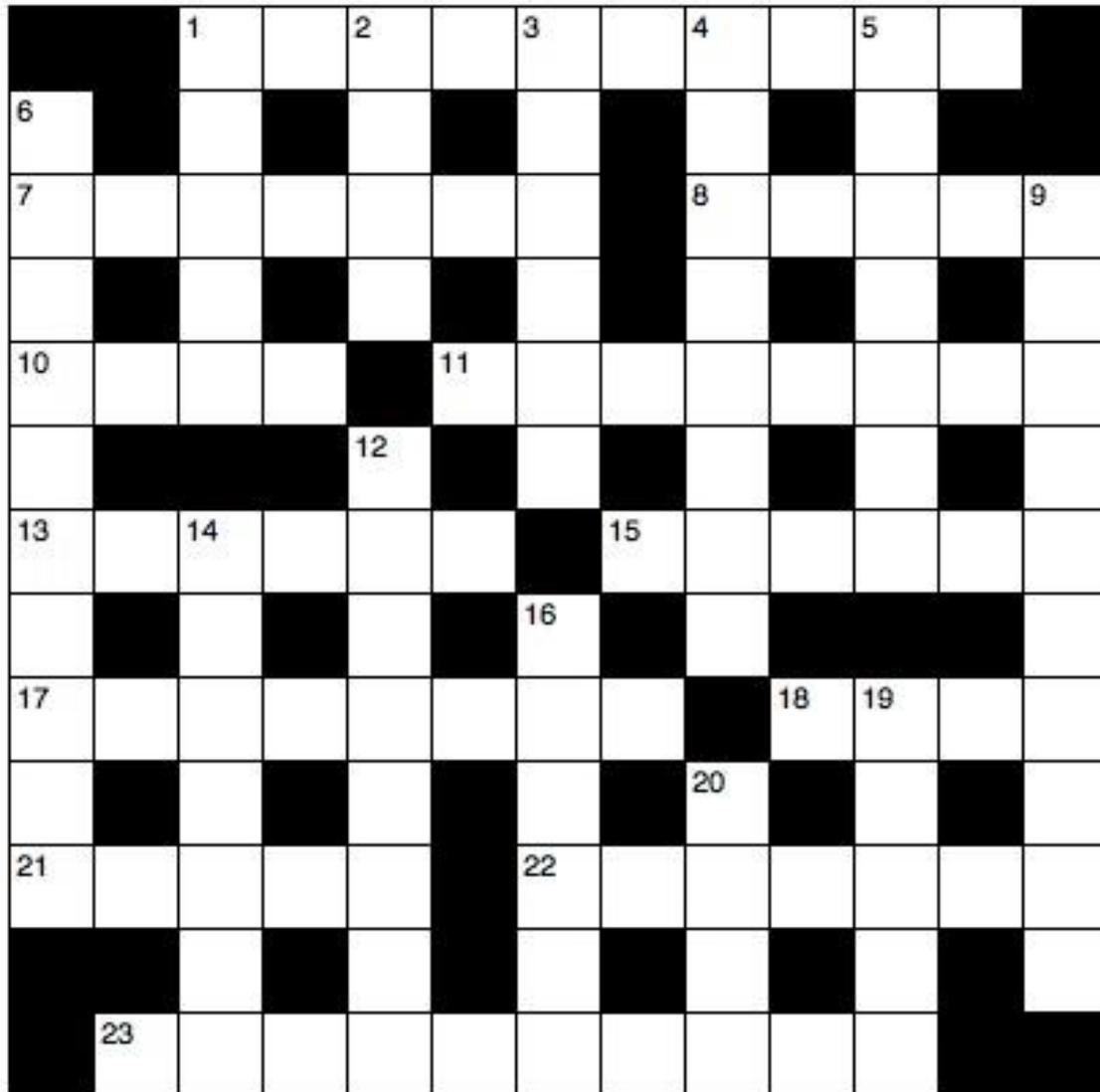
The period from 1st September until the Feast of St Francis of Assisi on 4th October is promoted by a number of Christian churches as a time of wonder, thanksgiving and praise.

St. Alban's Justice and Peace Group warmly invite you to join in some or all of this period of daily reflection, enjoyment and action as stewards of creation and Our Common Home.

Celebrating The Season of Creation "Jubilee of the Earth: New Rhythms, New Hope" forthcoming event:-

Sunday 27th September 2.00pm Reflective Ramble Walk to reflect on and appreciate God's creation followed by tea and cakes. Teggs Nose Country Park SK11 0AP. Further details from Bernadette Bailey on 07831 647 928.

Just for fun!



Crossword Clues & Answers

Across

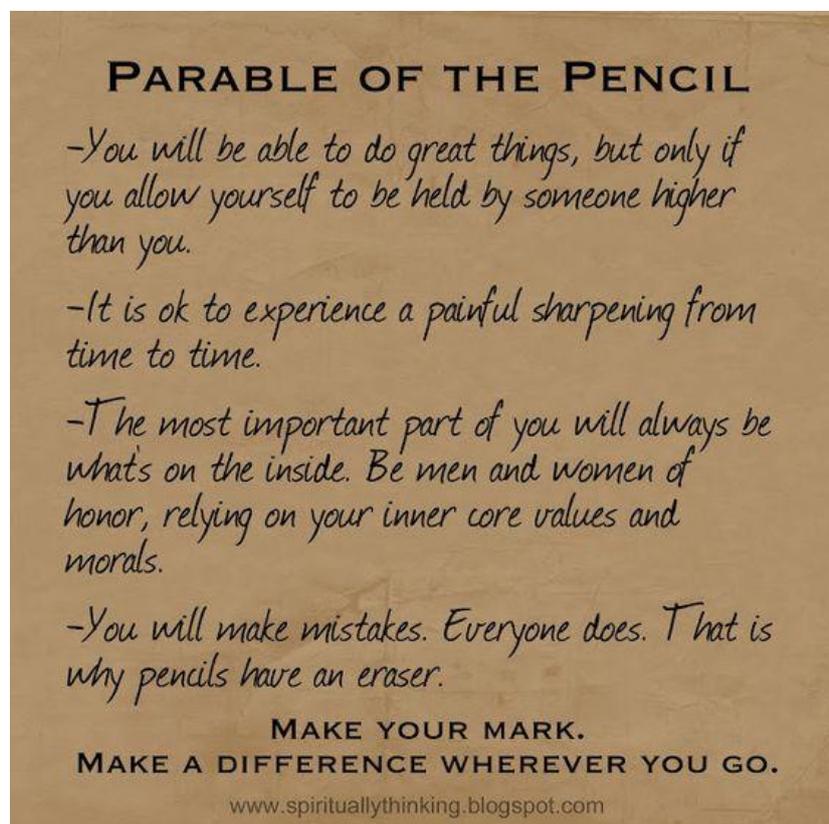
- 1 He was replaced as king of Judah by his uncle Mattaniah (2 Kings 24:17) (10)
- 7 'Let us fix our eyes on Jesus... who for the joy set before him — the cross' (Hebrews 12:2) (7)
- 8 Relieved (5)
- 10 Impetuous (Acts 19:36) (4)
- 11 Surprised and alarmed (Luke 24:37) (8)
- 13 'It is — for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for the rich to enter the kingdom of God' (Mark 10:25) (6)
- 15 Directions for the conduct of a church service (6)
- 17 One of the acts of the sinful nature (Galatians 5:19) (8)
- 18 and 20 Down 'She began to wet his — with her tears. Then she wiped them with her — ' (Luke 7:38) (4,4)

- 21 'We will all be changed, in a flash, in the twinkling of an — , — the last trumpet' (1 Corinthians 15:51–52) (3,2)
 22 'But he replied, "Lord, I am — — go with you to prison and to death"' (Luke 22:33) (5,2)
 23 Third person of the Trinity (2 Corinthians 13:14) (4,6)

Down

- 1 He betrayed Jesus (Matthew 27:3) (5)
 2 Paul's assurance to the Philippian jailer: 'Don't — yourself! We are all here!' (Acts 16:28) (4)
 3 'Fear God and keep his commandments, for this — the whole — of man' (Ecclesiastes 12:13) (2,4)
 4 The sort of giver God loves (2 Corinthians 9:7) (8)
 5 Sun rail (anag.) (7)
 6 Naboth, the ill-fated vineyard owner, was one (1 Kings 21:1) (10)
 9 Paul said of young widows, 'When their sensual desires overcome their — to Christ, they want to marry' (1 Timothy 5:11) (10)
 12 This was how Joseph of Arimathea practised his discipleship 'because he feared the Jews' (John 19:38) (8)
 14 Mop ruse (anag.) (7)
 16 Foment (Philippians 1:17) (4,2)
 19 Where Joseph and Mary escaped to with the baby Jesus (Matthew 2:14) (5)
 20 See 18 Across

Parish Pump



Fancy baking?

Celebrated annually on the 6th September, National Read a Book Day is an annual awareness day that encourages all of us to take a break and get reading, either curled up on the sofa or for the little ones, perhaps read aloud to family and friends.

This week's recipe encourages us to read a book.... the Bible, hope you have fun with it!

Scripture cake

Ingredients

115g Jeremiah	Chapter 1 v.11
350g Jeremiah	Chapter XXIV v.2
350g I Chronicles	Chapter XXII v.40
500g Leviticus	Chapter 11 v.2
2tsp Galatians	Chapter V v.9
1tsp Solomon	Chapter IV v.14
Pinch St Matthew	Chapter V v.13
6 Job	Chapter XXXIX v.14
350g Isaiah	Chapter VII v.15
450g Jeremiah	Chapter VI v.20
2tbsp 1 Samuel	Chapter XIV v.29
½ breakfast cup Solomon	Chapter IV v.11

Chop the first three ingredients.

Sift the Leviticus and the Galatians in a bowl together with the Solomon Chapter IV v.14 and Matthew.

Lightly beat Job. Cream Isaiah and Jeremiah together until light and fluffy, gradually mixing in the beaten Job and sifted ingredients, using a wooden spoon, until smooth. Fold in the 1 Samuel, Solomon Chapter IV v.11 and remaining ingredients. Spoon the mixture into a greased and lined 20cm/8 inch cake tin and bake in the oven for approximately 2 to 2.5 hours.

If the cake begins to brown too quickly, cover the top with a sheet of brown paper. When the cake is well risen and firm to touch, insert a skewer into the centre. If the cake is cooked, it will come out cleanly. Leave to cool in the tin for 30 minutes before turning out onto a wire rack.

Tell us about your bakes & share your favourite recipes

Please send us your photos of your finished bakes!

email: macclesfieldcircuit@gmail.com

SERVICE LINKS & CONTACTS

Sunday 6 September

AM – Morning worship led by Graham

WATCH ONLINE <http://tiny.cc/trinity13>

The Reading is Matthew 18: 15-20

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.....

13 September AM – led by Ros

20 September AM – led by Graham

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

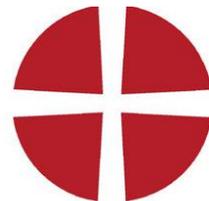


FREE phone lines for prayers and news from the Methodist Church

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

For Children & Families

Angela Bourne

Tel: 07901 777506

Email: methodistfamilies@gmail.com

Ministers

Rev Graham Edwards

Tel: 01625 426051

Email: graham.edwards@methodist.org.uk

Rev Ros Watson

Tel: 01625 872060

Email: ros.watson@methodist.org.uk

Rev Helen Byrne

On sabbatical

SCRIPTURE CAKE TRANSLATION

115g almonds, 350g figs, 350g raisins, 500g plain flour, 2tsp baking powder, 1tsp cinnamon, Pinch of salt, 6 eggs, 350g butter, 450g sugar, 2tbsp honey, ½ breakfast cup milk.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1, Jehoiachin. 7, Endured. 8, Eased. 10, Rash. 11, Startled. 13, Easier. 15, Rubric. 17, Impurity. 18, Feet. 21, Eye at. 22, Ready to. 23, Holy Spirit.

DOWN: 1, Judas. 2, Harm. 3, Is duty. 4, Cheerful. 5, Insular. 6, Jezreelite. 9, Dedication. 12, Secretly. 14, Supremo. 16, Stir up. 19, Egypt. 20, Hair.