



# MINI MACCLESFIELD MESSENGER

30<sup>th</sup> Issue: 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2020

Please feel free to distribute 'Mini Messenger' to others who may find it of interest.

## A message from the Superintendent

Dear Friends,

On Wednesday this week I had an appointment in Manchester which meant I had to



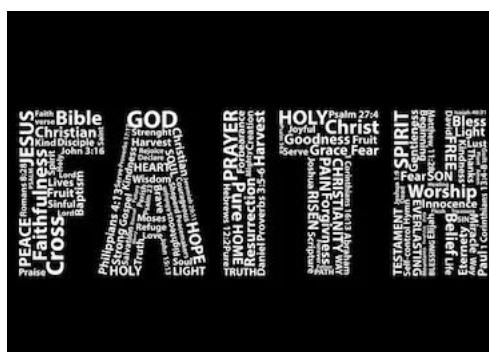
leave the house early in the morning (anything before 9am is early!). As I drove out of Tytherington I noticed that the sky was very dark and wondered if it was about to rain. Then I remembered being told that when it is about to rain the cows will lie down, so you can imagine my consternation when I looked into the fields and saw the cows equally split between those standing and

those lying down! Clearly, I can't put my trust in cows! As I drove on, a car in front of me turned off the road without indicating, and as I muttered to myself about this, I remembered some advice from my driving instructor back in 1997 “ –never trust an indicator”. “Other drivers can do unpredictable things” he said “so never trust their indicators!” With all this going through my mind I began to think of other things I put my trust in, my car for instance, but I've told you of some of my historical troubles with cars, so I can't always trust them! Or perhaps my laptop which was all well and good until it stopped charging and was beyond all help! Or even my television which for years had been dependable until the day it started turning itself off at random times! So, what do I put my trust in?



The world we live in suggests all kinds of things we can trust in, and yet almost all of those things will fail us at some point. Of course, this has been the case for generations - governments come and go and depending where we stand politically, we might be disappointed or delighted. However much money there is in a rich county like ours, there are always people who are forced to use food banks to survive. At some point in our lives we are forced to realise that those who we believe offer strong leadership or spiritual wisdom in our communities are as fallible as anyone else. And of course in the world we live in today, where everything seems to be up in the air - where do we put our trust?

As people of faith we believe we know where to look, the great stories of our faith and



for many of our own experiences, remind us to look beyond ourselves. We look to God, not in the hope that he will somehow fix everything in a flash of supernatural power – but because all we know tells us, and shows us a new way to live – even in the strangest and most unpredictable of times. A God who put his love into the creation of all things. A God who fulfilled unthinkable promises to his children. A God who never gave up even when his people ignored him and even worked against him.

A God who sent Prophets, Priest, Kings, and Judges to help his people understand how to know his grace in their lives. A God who entered this world as a small vulnerable baby to be one of us. A God who called us to value the least and love our enemies. A God who died on a cross to open our eyes to the unimaginable depth of his love. A God who we still meet in expected and unexpected places of the world – as he whispers, shouts, and in countless ways shows he is our God, and we are his children. Who says we – each of us and all of us - are his children. Who says “I am with you always – to the end of the age”. That is the God in whom we can put our trust.

In C.S. Lewis 'book Prince Caspian, Lucy having returned to Narnia after a year away meets Aslan:

“Aslan ... you're bigger.” She says,  
“That is because you are older, little one,” answered he.  
“Not because you are?”  
“I am not. But every year you grow, you will find me bigger”.

As we grow, our understanding of God grows, as we encounter the one who walks with us all our lives - rejoices with us, weeps with us, and stays with us. In a changing unpredictable world, this is where we put our trust – it will not be in vain.

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.**

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### Please keep collecting!

Our doors are closed again but don't forget other ways of giving! Church finances continue to be stretched, so if you haven't already, why not set up a regular Standing Order?

And of course, don't forget to Gift Aid if you can - it's worth an extra 25% from HMRC for your church.

Your church Treasurer can let you know how you can help – they'd be delighted to hear from you!!!

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## Children & Families

For those missing Sunday School, or if you know other children who may be interested, this week's focus is **Matthew 25: 31-46**, exploring together the message of the sheep and the goats.

Would your child/children like to take part in 'The Greatest Story Ever Told'? We may not be able to put on a nativity play in our church's, but that will not stop us. We intend to do a Virtual Nativity Play and have a guaranteed part for every child!!!

Here is the plan: -

- email [methodistfamilies@gmail.com](mailto:methodistfamilies@gmail.com) for a consent form and return completed form ASAP.
- Wait to receive your part via email between 24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020.
- Get yourself into character by dressing up, using whatever you can find in your home.
- Record yourself saying your lines either on a smart phone, tablet, laptop, or computer. If you are using a smartphone or tablet, ensure your device is recording landscape.
- Once you are happy with your recording send it over to us by Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020 either by email or what's app.  
Email address: [methodistfamilies@gmail.com](mailto:methodistfamilies@gmail.com)  
Mobile: 07901 777506
- Then sit back and wait for the release date of 20<sup>th</sup> December 2020 (that's if everything works out alright).



Angela

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**Prayer– in our Circuit Prayer Cycle we remember Poynton this week. This prayer has been provided by Margaret Wilson.**

Let's pray

Dear Lord,

As each day unfolds, we are made more aware of how uncertain the future is. We are so grateful that we are upheld in the knowledge that we serve a God who is the same yesterday, today and forever and the future is in His hands.

For many people Lord, there is real fear with so many questions and no real answers.

At this time, we recall how your first disciples experienced fear and uncertainty, in the Upper Room, about their future too.

The words you gave to them, “Peace be with you” transformed their lives and we hold onto those words in our world today.

In our broken and hurting world, we bring before you those suffering from the virus; the bereaved, the lonely, those living in poverty or facing injustice, persecution or starvation.

May they know your warmth and healing touch.

Bring them a renewed hope and peace that the world cannot give.

Bless the aid agencies that they may never lack the resources to continue their work.  
Bless the governments of the world in the decisions they make to combat the virus.

May we embrace by our prayers and actions all those who are suffering, that as we give, others may live.

May we support each other in our church families and share your love following your example and keeping our eyes fixed on You.

Amen

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



***O Soul, are you weary and troubled?***

***No light in the darkness you see?***

Nobody will be surprised to know that many people feel lost in the present treacherous darkness of spirit, and wonder how long they may have to wait for this nightmare to vanish.

This hymn has a wonderfully encouraging chorus:

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
look full in His wonderful face;  
and the things of life will grow strangely dim  
in the light of His glory and grace.*

A second chorus that may not be generally known is:

*Keep your eyes upon Jesus,  
LET NOBODY ELSE TAKE HIS PLACE.  
Then day by day He will show you the way,  
till at last you have run the great race.*

These beautiful choruses will help us not to allow Covid-19 to imprison us!

When we remember hymns and, better still, **can sing or hum** them, we feel new strength entering our hearts. Jesus is near us, He carries us when the going gets too hard. Has He not invited us to come to Him when we are “*weak and heavy-laden, cumbered with a load of care*”?

We have now been told that the new restrictions may well last till Easter. Can you envisage a time of Advent and Christmas WITHOUT any music?? What can we do to celebrate this coming time of preparation for the birth of our Saviour? Are Christmas dinners, sales, presents and television programs the only distractions to make us happy? There must be a way to celebrate this world-shattering event without breaking the law.

So we are not allowed to sing? OK, we sing among ourselves: **on the phone!** The Methodist Church has such a rich tradition of singing, thousands of hymns have been written – all deeply based on the Bible. Just think what a treasure trove we have. Even if we cannot remember all the lines, we only have to look at the Psalms which are full of texts for the hymns. The greatest joy for us has been to sing such meaningful and melodious hymns in the Methodist Church. So often, some lines from the Psalms come into our mind for all sorts of situations we encounter; sometimes, one or two lines which provide so much comfort. Our God is greater than the scourge of Covid-19!

What about starting another way of communicating with each other via songs and hymns, and then possibly even pray together on the phone? Some people may recoil at the very idea of singing without the help of an instrument, but we can still read the hymns and pray together over the phone.

Let us not be defeated – it is spiritual darkness that we are standing up to!

#### **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**

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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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### **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/UCh1PS5ox80YSZj71WMDHv mQ?fbclid=IwAR2kh47mOQ5ZdZHvNvLsFqemJ3TwylalezVvSsywnvucNS569sb1tDhsnI> 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.

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### **Helen's Blog**

As we travelled across to the Isle of Mull the scenery before us was breathtaking. We have four nights here, three full days, in which to explore Mull and go over to Iona.

Our campsite was by the harbour, overlooking the port of Craignure, with this beautiful view every evening from our door. The first full day was to take us across to Iona. Due to Covid, most campsites had been closed and google maps suggested we were only 30ish miles away from the port to take us across to Iona. What Google DIDN'T tell us was that the entire journey would be mostly on single track road with passing places (none of which were designed for 8 metre long motorhomes!). Needless to say, my companion and driver (and much loved hubby) was not impressed when I told him of our 7am setoff time to make the 90 minute journey to catch the morning ferry (not to mention the same time to get home afterwards too....).



We had a great time on the road though and met these guys wandering about without a care in the world. One of my followers on the blog showed his young daughter a video I posted there of when we met these cattle. She loved it so much he had to keep playing it for her.

Go and see for yourself – it was quite an encounter!

Once we got to Fionnphort we awaited our ferry, only to discover that our vehicle was so large, the ferry had to do a reverse dock, in order to get us on board (note vehicles are not allowed on Iona except for special permits and disabled travellers). Needless to say we were the only motorhome on the island and the locals were not overly pleased to see us attempting to park it anywhere, but we kept out of the way and it was necessary to enable Dave to accompany me to the Abbey.

Despite grumpy ferry attendants and disgruntled locals, our time on Iona itself was very blessed. First was the visit to the bookshop across from the abbey, where Dave treated me to a beautiful new stole, with the Iona tartan and St Martin's Cross on it. Along with the numerous books and some beautiful artwork, I felt drawn into the sense of something rather beautiful, special and unique about this place and wandered over to the Abbey to discover more.

The Abbey was not doing any guided tours but you could wander around the grounds and take a peak into the chapel area. I wasn't able to share in the worship as there was none taking place at the time, but I did find some rest in the Abbey Grounds where there are two crosses outside the Abbey, one being St Martin's Cross. There are carvings on the cross in an interweaving Celtic pattern, symbolic of the intertwining of earth and heaven, the sacred and the secular.

I adore Celtic artwork and decided to do take up some colouring on my journey (as a way to relax) which I found very calming and refreshing. It's not a masterpiece, but it's part of my story so I share it with you at the end of this article.



two beaches I had hoped to visit but the other (St Columba's Bay) was a bit too

From their I found my way to the 'Beach at the Back of the Ocean', a place my parents had been too many many years ago, when they were young pilgrims on their Christian journeys. Sharing in their history, I enjoyed a moment by the shore there whilst puppy Koda discovered the joys of digging in the sand. This is one of

difficult trek on my own and the weather was not in our favour. Still, this was a beautiful place to pause and pray.



Pilgrims come to Iona for many reasons, one is to reflect on their journey in life, perhaps to recharge, before they voyage onto their next chapters. They are encouraged to take one of these beautiful pebbles from St Columba's Bay, throw it into the ocean to represent something they are leaving behind or letting go of. And then take another pebble (ideally one of the beautiful jade coloured ones), walking off the beach without looking back, to represent their journey going forward from that moment. Well Koda and I did this on our beach and it felt just as powerful and releasing as it probably is at St Columba's Bay.

It's good for all of us sometimes to think about the things we should probably let go of (or put behind us) in order for us to look to tomorrow, confident that God will guide and equip us for whatever the future may hold.

For Dave and I, this was a blessed trip to a blessed island and we hope one day to return once more to this Holy Land, where Christianity came to these western shores 1400 years ago. I'd relish having some more peaceful moments here in one of the most spiritual prayer-filled, calm places I have ever encountered. I didn't need to be inside the abbey, just being present around the shores of Iona was, in itself, a most spirit-filled experience.

God be with you all till we meet again,

Helen

[Next week the Isle of Staffa!]

You can read more on my blog: [www.questforspirituality.com](http://www.questforspirituality.com)

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## Community....



### House of Good Report

There are more foodbanks than McDonalds in the UK. Most are linked to a church building.

A groundbreaking report from National Churches Trust demonstrates that the total economic and social value that church buildings generate in the UK is at least £12.4 billion per year which averages around £300,000 per church. That is roughly equal to the total NHS spending on mental health in England in 2018.

We believe that these findings are remarkable. They show that our churches are not just Houses of God. They are also Houses of Good – good that we risk losing if church buildings are not kept in good repair, and may never be able to replace.

Church leaders have called for urgent government support to protect church buildings after a new report from the National Churches Trust highlighted the UK's increasing reliance on mainly-volunteer led services including food banks, mental health counselling and youth groups based in churches, chapels and meeting houses.

*The House of Good* report from the National Churches Trust, the UK's leading church buildings support charity, has branded the nation's church buildings a 'National Help Service' after finding they provided £12.4 billion worth of essential social and economic support to local communities during the 12 months up until May 2020.

For the full report visit <https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/>



Give as you shop!

It is not surprising that Amazon sales have surged this year with lockdown triggering a reliance on online shopping.

But have you heard of AmazonSmile, a website where you can opt for 0.5% of the net purchase price of your shopping to be donated to The Leprosy Mission? The website is operated by Amazon with the same products and prices. Your 0.5% charity donation may seem like a drop in the ocean when there is such need in the world, but with many of you shopping this way the pennies soon become pounds.

You simply need to log onto [smile.amazon.co.uk](https://smile.amazon.co.uk) and nominate a charity. AmazonSmile is now also available via the Amazon Shopping app on iPhones and Android phones. Please don't miss this opportunity and consider nominating The Leprosy Mission as your chosen charity!



Just for fun!

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6	8	9	3					1
	3			1	9	8		
		1	6					

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Parish Pump

## Advent Group events



Join in one of the Advent Groups for 2020

<b>When</b>	<b>Where</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>How Do I Join?</b>
MONDAYS 7-8pm (starts 30 <sup>th</sup> Nov)	Online via zoom (by Gawsworth)	Reflects on the film Elf	Link will be provided - contact Graham
TUESDAYS 3-4.30pm (starts 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec)	Online via zoom (by Poynton & Green Close)	Studying 'At Home in Advent' book by Gordon Giles	Contact Ros Watson for details
TUESDAYS 1-2pm (starts 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec)	Online via zoom (by Macclesfield)	Reflects on the film Elf	Link will be provided - contact Graham
WEDNESDAYS 10-11.30am (starts 2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec)	Online via zoom (by Broken Cross)	Studying 'In the Bleak Midwinter' book by Rachel Mann	Access via Meeting ID: 856-0990-1813 Helen
WEDNESDAYS 7.30-9pm (starts 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec)	Online via zoom (by Poynton & Green Close)	Studying 'At Home in Advent' book by Gordon Giles	Contact Ros Watson for details
THURSDAYS 10-11.30am (starts 26 <sup>th</sup> Nov)	Online via zoom (by Prestbury & St Peters)	4 Characters from the Christmas Story	Access via Meeting ID: 847-6270-8696 Helen

We hope that you will be able to take the opportunity to join a group and reflect together on the meaning of Advent.

Please let the relevant Minister know if you are planning to attend, thank you.

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## SERVICE LINKS & CONTACTS

**Sunday 22 November**

**AM** – Morning worship led by Graham

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

The Reading is Matthew 25: 31-46

**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.....**

29 November AM – led by Helen

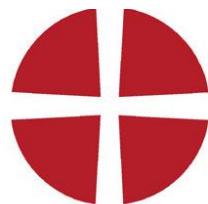
6 December AM – led by Ros

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>

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## **Contact Details**

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

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### ***Ministers***

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