



MINI MACCLESFIELD MESSENGER

32nd Issue: 6th December 2020

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

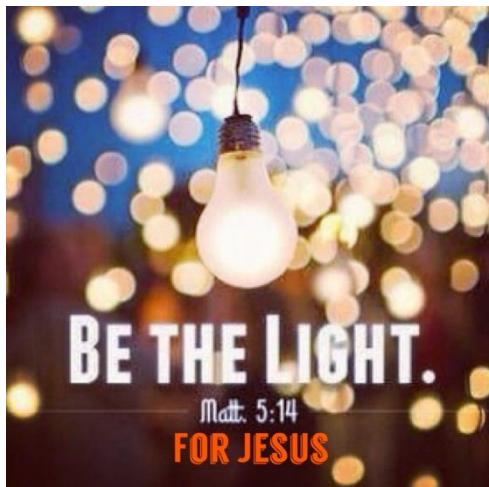
A message from the Superintendent

Dear Friends,

I have to make an admission. About this time every year, I feel my inner Grinch is in danger of emerging! It usually comes out when I am in shops and hear Christmas music playing when it's still September! Or when I am driving about and see houses covered in lights when it is still November! I Find myself muttering under my breath about these things, or at least I hope it's under my breath! Year by year it seems to get later when I manage to get decorations out of the loft, put up the tree, and allow Christmas music to play in the house or car! So much so that I occasionally wonder what difference it would make if I didn't bother with any of it! This year though, I've been wondering about all this, as decorations and music seem to have come even earlier than usual, what does it tell me? Well, I think at its most basic level it tells me something is happening! There is something happening that people want to call attention to, to celebrate and to enjoy – and the decorations, lights, and all that have become symbols for us.



Symbols have an important role in many aspects of our lives – little traditions we have as families, the things we do year by year that make us look beyond ourselves and remind us of what is important to us. There is a symbolic life in the church too, celebrating Holy Communion, sharing the peace, the corporate singing of hymns, (even passing the collection plate!). All these things call us to look beyond ourselves and notice the presence of God at work in the church and in the world and commit ourselves to that life giving work. The danger, as with all the symbolic action, is that it becomes meaningless and we are just going through the motions. This year, however, we can't access some of those symbolic actions – at least not in the same way. So we need to find some new ways of looking beyond ourselves as we travel through Advent and Christmas. Perhaps light is the symbol we need – not that we all have to go out and plaster our homes with all the lights we can find, but rather that we notice light when we see it, in whatever way, in whatever place and give thanks.



Give thanks for the light that pierces the darkness. Give thanks for the light that illuminates our way. Give thanks for the light that lifts our spirits. Give thanks for the light that send [my] Grinches running for cover! Give thanks for the light that shines in the darkness – for God's light. Then perhaps that symbol will call us on, not simply to put lights up and enjoy them, but to be light in the world.

Maybe we need the well-lit houses this year reminding us that something is happening, but we certainly need the presence and the power of

God's light shining in and through us.

Mother Teresa said

We need to give Christ a chance to make use of us, to be His word and His work, to share His food and His clothing in the world today. If we do not radiate the light of Christ around us, the sense of the darkness that prevails in the world will increase.

As we move through Advent and remind ourselves of the familiar stories, look for new insights, and stand amazed yet again at the wonder of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, look for light. Search it out, put your own up, stop and look at the power of light to tear the darkness – but don't stop there, *be* light in the world. Why? Because God's light cannot be overcome – and we have a part to play in God's great work!

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!

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!!!

Children & Families

For those missing Sunday School, or if you know other children who may be interested, this week's focus is **Mark 1.1-8 - Play and wonder about the good news of Jesus.** Resources attached.

Would you like to create your own Nativity set, just like the one in the picture? If so,

you need to get one of our Nativity Bags this Christmas.



The bags have everything you need to create your own family Nativity set and lots more activities as well. All you need to provide is paint, coloured pens, glue, and scissors.

There is a suggested donation of £2 per bag. If you would like to reserve a bag, please email Angela on

methodistfamilies@gmail.com so we can arrange collection or delivery.

Messy Christmas – Sunday 13th December 3-4pm

Macclesfield Methodist Circuit

Messy Christmas

Sunday 13th December 3-4pm via Zoom

To find out more visit: [@MacclesfieldCircuit](#)

or email methodistfamilies@gmail.com to reserve a place

Angela

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

Let's pray

A Prayer of Anticipation for the 2nd Sunday in Advent

Loving God, we usually look forward to Christmas with eager anticipation, but this year we do not know what will happen or how it will be. Help us to remember that Christmas is not about the trappings, but that we are anticipating the most wonderful event in history, the birth of your son Jesus and that does not change regardless of circumstances.

God of surprises, full of mystery and wonder, we know you will never fail us and as we look forward to Christmas, although this year perhaps very different, we know you will bless us richly and way beyond our anticipation and imagination, so we praise you.

Father God keep us alive to the wonders of your beautiful world every day we see new things, as we walk and talk with you. This Christmas we pray for gifts of love and compassion and for peace in a troubled world

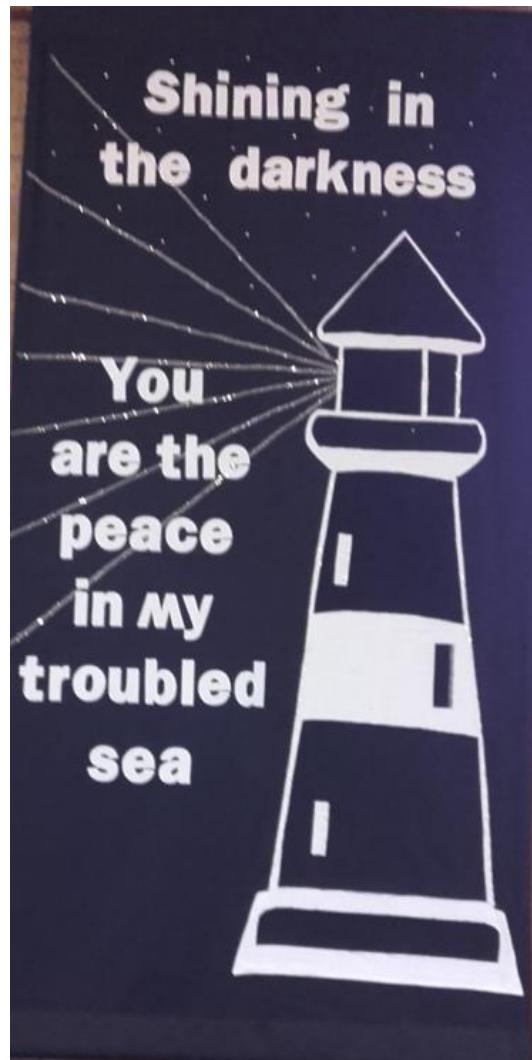
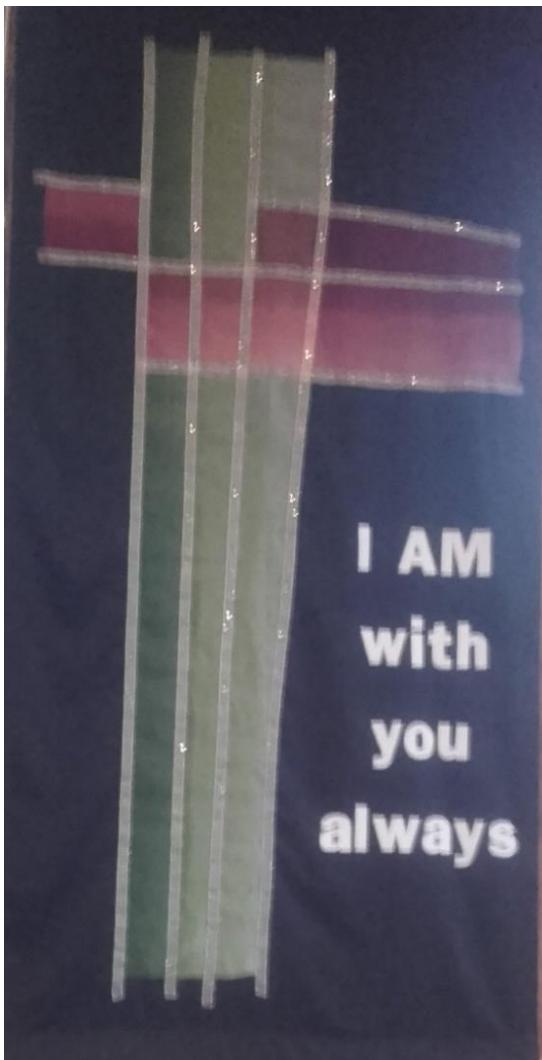
Heavenly father we pray that with changing circumstances there will be even greater anticipation of the gift of a baby, promised so long ago, who became man and remains with us in glorious love

Loving father we look forward with eager anticipation to celebrating the season of the birth of our Saviour. We humbly offer our thanks for your awesome gift that of your beloved son Jesus in whose name we pray

Amen.



Members' voice - by Mandy Hawkyard, Poynton



These banners were made recently for Poynton in remembrance of Marie who died earlier this year. She had a tremendous faith which she shared with all around her. She was a very special lady. The left hand banner is taken from a picture that Marie gave me before she died and the second one is taken from the last hymn chosen by Marie for her funeral – “My Lighthouse” by Rend Collective.

Could there be a more appropriate message to have at the front of the Church during the times we are in now? A huge thank you to Linda Grant for making them.

In my wrestling and in my doubts
In my failures You won't walk out
Your great love will lead me through
You are the peace in my troubled sea
You are the peace in my troubled sea

Chorus

In the silence, You won't let go
In the questions, Your truth will hold
Your great love will lead me through
You are the peace in my troubled sea
You are the peace in my troubled sea

*My lighthouse, my lighthouse
Shining in the darkness, I will follow You
My lighthouse, my lighthouse
I will trust the promise
You will carry me safe to shore...*

I won't fear what tomorrow brings
With each morning I'll rise and sing
My God's love will lead me through
You are the peace in my troubled sea
You are the peace in my troubled sea...

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?

PLEASE HELP!! We just need 14 more subscribers to give us our 'proper' url.

(That's the link to the morning service that we include each week.) We'll be able to include it on marketing material to reach more of our community, **PLUS subscribers are able to access all our Christmas services coming up in December at their leisure – don't miss a thing!**

Please subscribe to our channel NOW at.....

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCh1PS5ox80YSZj71WMDHVmQ?fbclid=IwAR2kh47mOQ5ZdZHpVnLvSFgemJ3TwylalezVvSsywnvucNS569sb1tDhsnI>

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'.

Subscribing doesn't cost anything as this is a free channel.

***There's a Subscribe button under any YouTube video or on a channel's page.
Tell your relatives, friends, neighbours and ask them to subscribe too!!***

Helen's Blog

Quest for Spirituality

More in next week's special Christmas edition of Mini Messenger.

Community....

Virtual Pilgrimage

This Christmas, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the baby of Bethlehem, join us to visit Bethlehem right from our homes on Thursday, the 10th of December 2020, at 7pm, which is also the International Human Rights Day, as the United Stockport Circuit organise a virtual pilgrimage on Zoom in collaboration with the Alternative Tourism Group (ATG) in Palestine. During this virtual pilgrimage, we will be able to view three sites in Bethlehem, and will be able to interact with the friends of ATG about the context today. There is an entry ticket of £5 to join in this pilgrimage, and other donations are welcome. The proceeds will go straight towards the work of justice and peace initiatives of ATG in Palestine. For more details contact: raj.patta@methodist.org.uk or office@heatonmoorunitedchurch.org.uk

Have you done your Christmas shopping yet??



Methodist
relief and
development

Extraordinary Gifts

Practical gifts that help people in some of the world's poorest communities to become all that they can. From providing a child in Uganda with a bicycle to get to and from school, to ensuring that a family in Zimbabwe has clean water to drink— you will find gifts

to capture the hearts and imaginations of your loved ones and make a world of difference to a family in need this Christmas. With every Extraordinary Gift, you will receive a card to pass on to your loved one, showing them the kind of difference their gift could make. See www.allwecan.org.uk



**East Cheshire
Hospice**
Where people come to live

Christmas Present Shopping

Despite the challenges that 2020 has presented, the hard working and dedicated teams at our Charity shops have continually adapted and made sure there is always an opportunity to purchase some of our

fantastic donations from our shops.

So whilst you are thinking about your Christmas shopping, please do think of us. Inside our three Hospice shops, **including the new ECHO by East Cheshire Hospice shop in Poynton**, are so many hidden treasures that would make fantastic gifts.





This Autumn we also introduced some Handmade Goods to our shops, lovingly made by our volunteers and supporters.

So, look out for these gorgeous items in store and across our Facebook pages.

Snowed In At Home with The Apex Singers

We're enormously grateful and delighted that The Apex Singers have chosen to support East Cheshire Hospice with their upcoming festive performance which will be broadcast online on December 12th!

Get your tickets and include your donation at stollerhall.com/whats-on/snowed-in-at-home
The sensational a cappella ensemble's Christmas concert "Snowed In At Home" will be broadcast from the beautiful The Stoller Hall on **Saturday 12th December at 7:30pm**. Witness songs from around the world, including everything from Catalonian & Swedish carols, to American and Irish folk tunes.



And if you can't watch on the 12th, the concert will be available to ticket holders right up until the end of the year, so you can watch it whenever is convenient for you!



As I write this in November it seems highly unlikely that we will be having carol services and all the traditional music making of Christmas time. So, I have recorded on CD a selection of 20 well known carols from SINGING THE FAITH on the organ of Macclesfield Methodist Church. Each carol follows exactly the same number of verses as in STF and I have tried to interpret the texts accordingly. Apologies if I've missed out anyone's favourite carol.

All the words will be available in booklet form if you don't have a copy of STF at home. So I do hope you will enjoy singing along or just listening to these wonderful carols whether you are washing up, making Christmas meals, decorating the house, wrapping gifts or just chilling....!

Any donations will go to ACTION FOR CHILDREN, the children's charity of the Methodist Church.

Thanks, Andrew Donaldson
(email andy.donaldson@mdmt.org.uk 01625 433187)

Why not get your community singing??

CAROLS ON THE DOORSTEP

*** SUNDAY 20TH DECEMBER
5:30 PM**

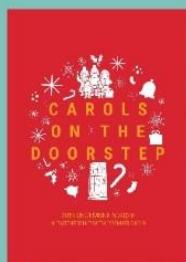
**Join us for a National carol sing on your
doorstep with your neighbours.**

It's so easy to join in....

***Download and print the Carol Sheet and invitation from**
www.premierchristianradio.com. or
www.newcastlemethodistdistrict.org *

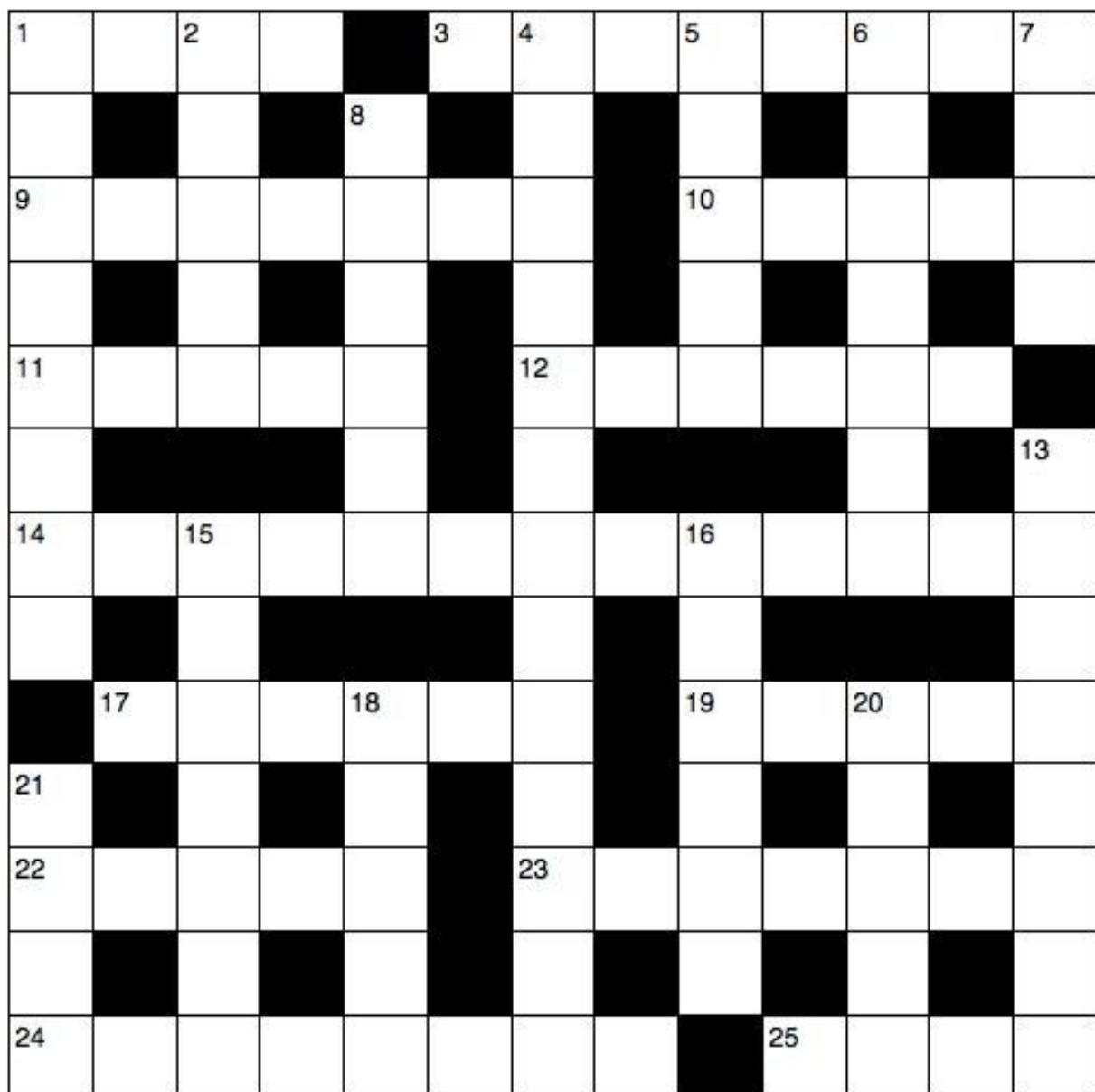
***Pop them through your neighbours' doors inviting them
to join you**

***5:30pm on 20th December tune your radio to Premier
Radio or Freeview 725 or download the Premier Radio app
on your phone, then sing along to the Carols played. Why
not wear your festive jumpers too and even bring out
something to shake or rattle?**



<https://www.facebook.com/CarolsOnTheDoorstep>

Just for fun!



Crossword Clues

Across

- 1 'How long will you — your face from me?' (Psalm 13:1) (4)
- 3 'Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the — he bore' (Hebrews 13:13) (8)
- 9 Posh sin (anag.) (Romans 8:15) (7)
- 10 Solemn pledges (Matthew 5:33) (5)
- 11 Italian term for full orchestra (5)
- 12 'For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not — the cry of the afflicted' (Psalm 9:12) (6)
- 14 Prescience (1 Peter 1:2) (13)
- 17 Where a Hindu holy man lives (6)
- 19 'If he found any... who belonged to the Way, whether — — women, he might take them as prisoners' (Acts 9:3) (3,2)
- 22 Fragrance (2 Corinthians 2:15) (5)
- 23 Vine hen (anag.) (Jonah 1:2) (7)
- 24 Precious stone decorating the twelfth foundation of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:20) (8)
- 25 'Will you keep to the old path that evil men have — ?' (Job 22:15) (4)

Down

- 1 'Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with — — ' (Numbers 20:11) (3,5)
- 2 'You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, " — — murder" (Matthew 5:21) (2,3)
- 4 One of Paul's many hardships endured as a servant of God (2 Corinthians 6:5) (13)
- 5 'We ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, — inwardly' (Romans 8:23) (5)
- 6 Changed (Daniel 6:8) (7)
- 7 'My yoke is — and my burden is light' (Matthew 11:30) (4)
- 8 Recoil (Revelation 12:11) (6)
- 13 'O Lord, you have — me and you know me' (Psalm 139:1) (8)
- 15 ' — to me the joy of your salvation' (Psalm 51:12) (7)
- 16 Express sorrow (Isaiah 16:7) (6)
- 18 'Then he said to Thomas, " — out your hand and put it into my side" (John 20:27) (5)
- 20 'God has said, " — will I leave you; — will I forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5) (5)
- 21 Son of Onam and brother of Shammai (1 Chronicles 2:28) (4)

Advent Group events

[Join in one of the Advent Groups for 2020](#)



When	Where	What	How Do I Join?
MONDAYS 7-8pm (starts 30 th Nov)	Online via zoom (by Gawsworth)	Reflects on the film Elf	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87154561929 Meeting ID: 871 5456 1929 Graham
TUESDAYS 1-2pm (starts 1 st Dec)	Online via zoom (by Macclesfield)	Reflects on the film Elf	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89109822209 Meeting ID: 891 0982 2209 Graham
WEDNESDAYS 10-11.30am (starts 2 nd 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 st Dec)	Online via zoom (by Poynton & Green Close)	Studying 'At Home in Advent' book by Gordon Giles	Contact Ros for details
THURSDAYS 10-11.30am (starts 26 th 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.

OTHER EVENTS COMING UP....

Virtual Nativity Play



More details to follow in next week's Christmas edition Mini Messenger!

Christingle



SERVICE LINKS & CONTACTS

Sunday 6 December – Advent 2

AM – Morning worship led by Ros

WATCH ONLINE : <http://tiny.cc/advent-2>

The Reading is Mark 1 v.1-8

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 December AM – led by Graham

20 December - Virtual Nativity

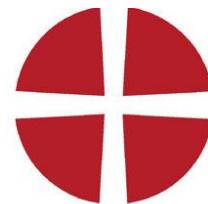
Christmas Eve - Christingle

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

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Rev Helen Byrne

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Email: helenmethodist@gmail.com

Rev Ros Watson

Tel: 01625 872060

Email: ros.watson@methodist.org.uk

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1, Hide. 3, Disgrace. 9, Sonship. 10, Oaths. 11, Tutti. 12, Ignore. 14, Foreknowledge. 17, Ashram. 19, Men or. 22, Aroma. 23, Nineveh. 24, Amethyst. 25, Trod. **DOWN:** 1, His staff. 2, Do not. 4, Imprisonments. 5, Groan. 6, Altered. 7, Easy. 8, Shrink. 13, Searched. 15, Restore. 16, Lament. 18, Reach. 20, Never. 21, Jada.