



MINI MACCLESFIELD MESSENGER

38th Issue: 14th February 2021

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

A message from the Superintendent

Dear Friends,

I woke up at about 3am the other night, and was somewhat confused by the light in my bedroom. It was a very white light coming from the edges of the curtains and



given the time of night this made no sense to me! Eventually, when my brain was functioning, I began to suspect what it was, and when I pulled the curtain back a bit, I was right. It was the snow. Light was reflecting on the covering of white snow, lighting up the gardens, the road, and the houses. I like the snow, not the wetness, or the coldness, or the threat of slipping, I like it mostly because of the way it reflects light, and

allows us to see places we know in new ways. Light is a beautiful, powerful thing!

I'm sure you know by now, that in my living room I have a tank of tropical fish. My family has a long tradition of fish tanks; we've had a number of them over the years, despite some issues. I call them issues; others might have another name for them... for instance I broke one (so did my brother), I managed to boil a tank full (not on purpose I should add!) and the list goes on! But we have persevered, for me the fish are fascinating, the different species, the different colours, the different behaviours. But I think the most amazing thing is what happens when I turn on the light.



Early in the morning when the lights come on, a whole new world is revealed! The light does remarkable things: The fish suddenly come to life – some begin to move and swim about, some quickly dive for cover behind the rocks, some swim to the top of the tank thinking they will be fed, and some whose colours have faded in the darkness begin to transform into the beautiful things they were created to be. Anything lying about in the tank is seen clearly – I've found whole skeletons (after coming home from holidays!), on one occasion I found a coin in there (I've still no idea how it got in there!) Light is a beautiful, powerful thing!

Jesus proclaimed that he was *the light*, so I occasionally wonder if a strip of LED lights in a fish tank can make such a difference and can bring such transformation, if a covering of snow can bring such a transformation - then what difference, what transformation can *the light* bring to our world?

The light can bring a new kind of life, to places and people who have lost energy and



enthusiasm, because in Jesus there is strength for his work. *The light* can release people to be all that God created them to be, it can release all kinds of gifts and skills and 'colours' in peoples lives, because in Jesus there is power for our lives. *The light* can reveal things long hidden, exposing the mess of people's lives, the things that can be hidden in darkness, not to make people feel guilty but so that those things can be cleared away, because in Jesus there is forgiveness. *The light* is powerful, but there are

always some who will run and hide behind the rocks, hoping that the light will never reach them.

So my question is: where are we in all this? Where are we as Christian people and as God's church? Are we allowing the light to shine on us, or hiding in the corner? Remember the words of Jesus:

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

In this strange time, we need to remember what it is to be people of light - what it is to be disciples of Christ, what it is to be the church. We have a role to play in the world, to offer a glimpse of God – God's love, God's world, God's priorities, through light and through love. Martin Luther King said "returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. We need light and love, and the world in which we live needs it too.

So, as we trust in God's plans - let *the light* shine on us!

As we continue to live as God's people - let *the light* shine in us!

As we continue to be God's church, seeking to serve God and our neighbours with integrity, care and the Gospel message - let *the light* shine through 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!

Please 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, for this week's focus we will be **exploring together the story of Jesus' transfiguration.. You can find it in your Bible in Mark 9 v.2-9.** Resources are attached.



Messy Easter preparations.....

I still need help from all our lovely knitters out there for the knitted cream egg chickens like the one in the picture for our Easter 'in a bag'. I would need these by the beginning of March.

If you can help, please can you contact me at methodistfamilies@gmail.com or 07901777506

Angela

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

The pandemic continues across the world, and in this country, as a consequence, we continue with a national lockdown.

Dear Lord, we ask that you give us the strength we need to endure this current situation, not just for our own good but for those around us to. Help us to look for the positive moments that arise: the kindness of others when they call you for a chat. The offer by someone to go to the shop for you, or a friend who provides company on a walk.

Let us take time to give thanks for all essential workers, but also remember those who are unable to work due to the current restrictions, and the evident difficulties that subsequently arise for them.

Give wisdom to our Government, scientific and medical advisors, as they face up to the challenging decisions they have to make.

Finally let us hold in our prayers those who are currently ill, those who have sadly passed away, and all their relatives, carers and friends.

AMEN

Members' voice - by Rev Sheila Bishop

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR TODAY LORD?

Who is my neighbour today Lord, and what do you want me to give?

To my neighbours near and far, in order that they can live,
with a sense of your presence near them, with the knowledge that someone cares
To remind them of your powerful peace, that can take away their fears.

Who Is my neighbour today Lord, and what would you have me give
to my neighbours near and far in order that they can thrive?

Is it a cheque for water clean, or a tent for shelter and food,
Or is it a letter with greetings warm, that makes people feel good.

Perhaps facetime, text or phone call, as we cannot meet face to face,
words which hopefully, for them, will speak your unfailing grace.

Who is my neighbour today Lord, your love, with whom must I share?
Open my eyes and my heart Lord, that I may lovingly care.

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

Signs of Spring

Perhaps as we return to our lockdown routines of daily walks, you may spot a little bit of creation – please take a picture and let us **share some signs of Spring!**

Please send us your pictures for sharing through Mini Messenger and let us celebrate the joy and beauty that is to come.

email:macclesfieldcircuit@gmail.com



The snowdrops were an uplifting sight on a winter walk yesterday. With everywhere so very wet, I decided to choose a circuit that stuck to footpaths around town, rather than trudging over muddy tracks and fields. I must remember to return to this spot, for a sequel photograph when the unopened daffodils will have burst into a joyful splash of yellow!

Jo Beesley.

YouTube

Our subscribers will now automatically get an alert when services have been put onto the YouTube channel.

If you haven't already subscribed, please do so at.....

<https://www.youtube.com/c/macclesfieldmethodistcircuit>

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!!

Subscribing will mean you don't miss any services!!

Roger Bolton - 50 years as a Local Preacher

It was with great joy last week that I was finally able to deliver to Roger Bolton a certificate from The Methodist Church that recognised 'with thankfulness to God' the 50 years of dedicated service that Roger has given as a Local Preacher. Roger's half century was actually achieved in 2020 but the impact of covid had prevented the

certificate being provided last year. It was signed by Rev Richard Teal, President of the Methodist Conference, and Carolyn Lawrence, Vice-President, and was accompanied by a congratulatory letter from Graham Edwards, our own Superintendent Minister. I'm sure we all share the sense of thankfulness for Roger's dedication to his calling over the years, and for the impact that his teaching and witnessing has had on the faith of so many people, both young and old.

Steve Oliver (Local Preachers' Circuit Secretary)

Helen's Blog

Quest for Spirituality

Updates from Helen's Sabbatical: FANTASTIC MEETS PHENOMENA!

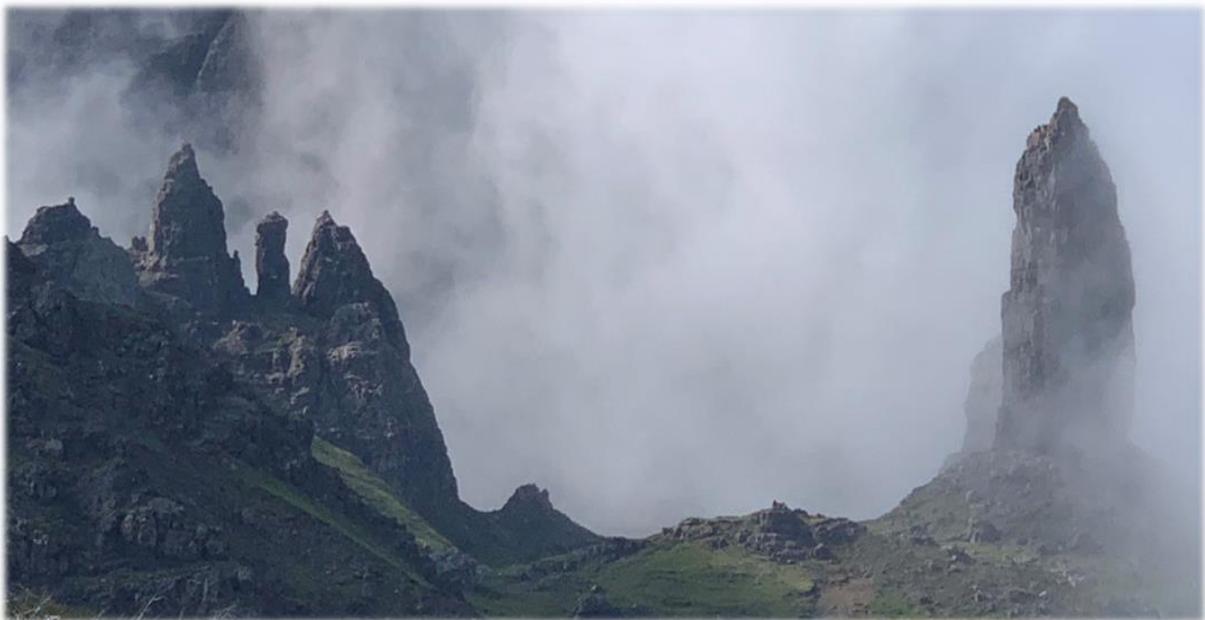
(Isle of Skye)



I have been blessed with a vivid imagination which enables me to transverse between the 'real' day-to-day world and the possible or the extra-ordinary or even the fantastical world. Stories full of vivid description of mystical places become so real to me as I venture into whatever magical places the author chooses to take me. A favourite childhood movie was *The Never Ending Story*, set in the world created by our dreams, coloured by human imagination. Then my teenage years I discovered Tolkien's book *The Lord of the Rings* with Tolkien's Middle Earth creating a fantastic world where places such as Hobbiton, Rivendell and Mordor fascinated me. One summer amidst those fractious years we went to Skye on a family holiday and I remember being drawn to the mountains of Skye as, to my vivid imagination, they echoed the mountains of Mordor and drew me in.

Skye is full of mountainous places, so much so that film makers have also been drawn to these mysterious rugged landscapes such as the Quiraing (pictured above) with its eerie other-worldliness that made wonderful sets for many films including *Stardust*, *Snow White and the Huntsman*, *47 Ronin*, *Macbeth*, *the BFG*, *King Arthur: Legend of the Sword*, *Transformers: the Last Knight*. Described by travel writer Charles Tait as 'one of the most dramatic and wild landscapes in Britain,' I couldn't miss a visit to this mysterious and eerie place where the 'fantastical rock formations loom in the gloom and it would not be a surprise to meet a Hobbit, an Orc, or a dragon.'

As I stood at the bottom of the steep path, a calm lake before me and the Quiraing looming up ahead, I stepped into my own world where the fantastical became possible, the supernatural entwined the natural and one's imagination was allowed a moment to dwell in story land adventures that had stimulated my formative years. Whether you share my vivid imagination or not, none could come here and not be impressed by the stunning landscape that surrounded me. One can wonder here – if not about the fantastical, then at least about the majestic and awesome way these landscapes present themselves to us mere humans – a place where we have no power, where we can only step into their domain briefly, humbly, carefully and then leave again when the elements choose to make these paths treacherous to the human step.



From the Quiraing we ventured onto the Old Man of Storr and found yet more stunning landscapes with paths inviting us up up into their wild domain. This 50m pinnacle points upwards like a jagged finger, visible from miles away, the Old Man is 12m in diameter as part of a group of basalt spires. There are up to 30 different layers of volcanic rock to be seen here, this place is nature at its wildest (Tait).

It was made all the more mysterious by the low clouds that kept rolling across the Storr as we made our way up the steep path. There are legends surrounding this natural phenomena, as often found in these parts. The Storr is said to have been carved by a Broonie (extremely small ugly creature who lived in the sea) in memory of his friend, or perhaps it is the remains of a giant's finger who once lived in this land?.....

The Storr, for me, echoed the volcanic barrages of Tolkien's Mordor, it's rugged eeriness warning us to keep away, yet a sense of curiosity, perhaps, drawing us closer with each step. I could imagine the Hobbits Frodo and Sam scrabbling up this gravelly rough terrain, terrified yet determined to complete their quest to save Middle Earth. Whilst it was quiet here I could hear in my head the sounds Tolkien so eloquently described in his books – sounds of eeriness, danger and a sense of a power beyond any human control or measure.

It wasn't a place for a puppy to get too close to as the paths beyond this point got very rugged indeed and many were crouched by the wayside above, struggling to go on. Koda and I decided we had got close enough to this beauty and settled here for a while, chatting with other walkers from around the globe who too had been drawn to this place of awe and mystery.



Thin places are not just those of calm serene beauty. We can also encounter the 'other-worldliness' or sense of the supernatural, perhaps even sacred, in rugged landscapes too. For me, I find feelings of excitement, awe, joy and anticipation along with those of fear, nervousness and caution all mix together to make this path one I would want to revisit again and again.

Paths with wonder and fear are not dissimilar to many paths we tread through life, a little bit of risk often needed to reach the place we seek. This path took me into a realm that is beyond us and yet able to be appreciated by us, drawing us in yet warning us to tread carefully as we go. These 'beyond -us' experiences and places are those one might connect with our search for connecting to some *thing* beyond 'us' that stirs something inside 'us'. Call it spirituality, call it soulfulness, call it supernatural – call it what you want! For each of us it is that sense of something extra-ordinary made accessible to the ordinary, wrapped in awe, wonder and a sense of appreciation (or joy) to be able to share in it. Come, savour the moment, step into the mystery and allow your imagination to guide you deeper into connection with whatever is beyond....

To read more of Helen's journey, visit her blog: www.questforspirituality.com

Community....

Action For Children

'Count your Blessings' during Lent (starts 17th Feb)

Get involved this Lent and help give children in the UK a safe and happy childhood by participating in 'Count Your Blessings.'

It's so simple - there's a short reflection for each of the 40 days in Lent that will make a real difference to children and families struggling in these challenging times.

It's informative and fun to read either as an individual, with the rest of your family or with a friend.

Just follow the link:

https://media.actionforchildren.org.uk/documents/1521_Count_Your_Blessings_DIGITAL.pdf

Further info from Steve Oliver, District Advocate: steve.oliver3@ntlworld.com



40 Day Resolution for Lent – help out your church

Instead of giving up something what about collecting something during Lent, or perhaps you could do a mixture of both?

Could you use this opportunity to raise some funds for your church?

One idea is if everyone in your church collected 40 coins (perhaps 20 pence pieces or even pounds) during Lent how much could you raise together?

If you are giving up something you would normally buy, why not save the cost and see how much you can pass over to your church Treasurer!



An alternative way to help from Ecclesiastical Insurance

The COVID-19 outbreak has hit churches hard in many ways – and finances have taken a particularly serious knock.

Trust130 was launched in 2017, to celebrate the 130th anniversary of the founding of the company. Under the scheme, in line with Ecclesiastical's charitable ownership and Christian values, every time a new customer takes out a new home insurance policy with the insurer it offers to donate £130 to the church or cathedral of that customer's choice.

It has been extraordinarily successful – to date, the company has given more than £430,000 to 2,283 churches around the UK. There is no limit on the number of donations which can be made.

If your home insurance is due for renewal and you are interested in how Trust130 can benefit your church, please contact Ecclesiastical Insurance on **0800 7830 130**.

SHROVE TUESDAY – 16th February



Even pancake day is going 'virtual' this year! Some churches are hosting their own pancake event (online). If you've not got an event planned, why not flip up some pancakes yourself and **join the Macclesfield Methodist gang for some fun pancakes 'on line' 4.30 – 5.30pm.**

If you'd like to join with a decorated pancake to show (& eat!), or just have fun in our Shrove Tuesday quiz and chat online.

Here's the zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89493631648>

Or, if you prefer, here is the Meeting ID: 894 9363 1648

LENT REFLECTIONS

We are running a series of groups across the Circuit, the sessions are not church specific, join whichever fits best for you.

Broken Cross & Prestbury

In our Lent groups this year we will be discussing the new lent book for 2021 by Archbishop Welby, entitled '*Living His Story: Revealing the extraordinary love of God in ordinary ways*'.

Times: weekly every Thursday mornings 10-11am

Dates: from 25th Feb – 25th March (5 sessions)

Anyone is welcome to join in from any of the churches. Helen will be leading these discussions. Click here to join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85054816407>

Or use the Meeting ID: 850 5481 6407

Macclesfield & Gawsorth

In our Lent groups we will be looking at a film. There will be two groups Monday evenings 7-8pm from 22nd February and Tuesday afternoons 1-2pm from 23rd February. Graham and Helen will be hosting these jointly. Details of how to join will be included next week.

Poynton

In our Lent groups this year we are looking at the Beatitudes found in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 5. We will be using the study guide, 'Life Attitudes: A 5 Session Course on the Beatitudes for Lent' by Robert Warren and Sue Mayfield. There will be two groups Tuesday 3-4pm beginning on 23rd February and Wednesday evening 8-9pm beginning on 24th February. Please let me know if you are going to come along...everyone is welcome. Ros.

Just for fun!

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

© 2008 KrazyDad.com

Parish Pump

NEW: Prayer page

Do you or anyone you know need praying for?

We'd like to include a section in Mini Messenger for us all across the Circuit to pray for those in need. If you'd like us to pray for you/others you know or are perhaps be providing pastoral support for etc.... then please let us know.

We can include them in a prayer section and we would ask that all our Mini Messenger readers hold those people in their prayers. If your church already has a method of including folk in prayer, that's great, but we can include them in Mini Messenger too if required. With all of us across the Circuit, that's a lot of prayers and you can never have too many!!

It's up to you how much or little detail you give – it can just be a name or be more specific, either is fine, but please make sure that whoever we're including, you have asked their permission first!

EXAMPLE

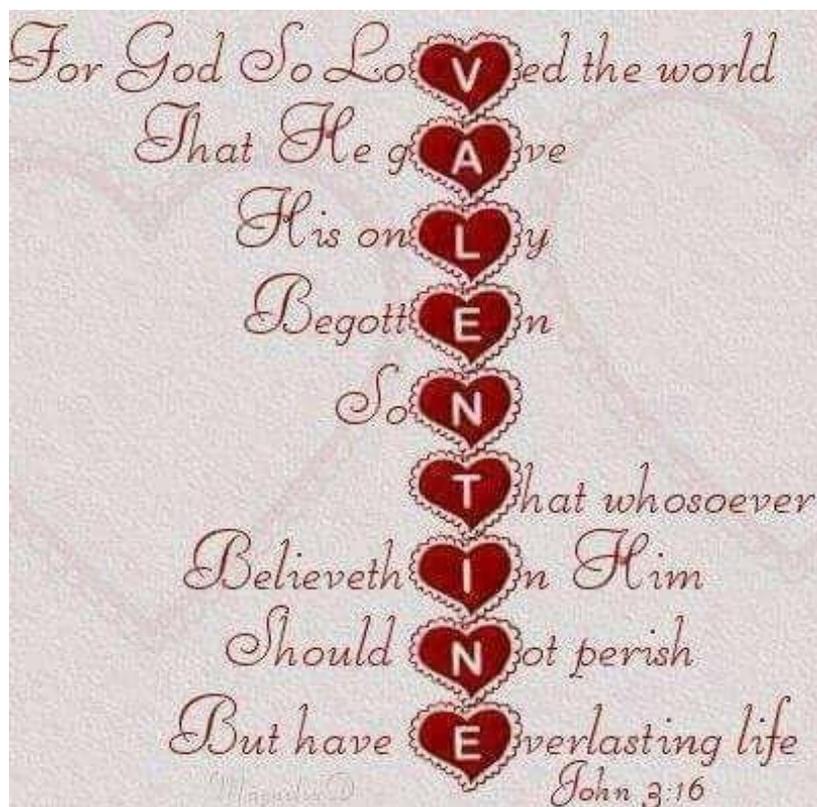
*We
remember...*

*The family of
Joe Bloggs*

*Anytown
Church*

Please email: macclesfieldcircuit@gmail.com

Valentines Day is for everyone.....



SERVICE LINKS & CONTACTS

Sunday 14 February

AM – Morning worship led by Graham

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

The Reading is Mark 9 v.2-9

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

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

YOUTUBE..... <https://www.youtube.com/c/macclesfieldmethodistcircuit>

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.....

21 February - Helen

28 February - Ros

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

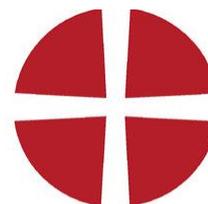


FREE phone lines for prayers and news from the Methodist Church

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

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 Helen Byrne

Tel: 01625 572259

Email: helenmethodist@gmail.com

Rev Ros Watson

Tel: 01625 872060

Email: ros.watson@methodist.org.uk
