



MINI MACCLESFIELD MESSENGER

40th Issue: 28th 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 have never really got on with early mornings (for future reference anything before 9am is early), and this affliction has been with me as long as I can remember. When my brother and I, who then shared a room, were High School students we did not always get up as quickly as my mum would have liked - this required some



creativity as she tried to communicate with us. She used to bang on the living room (which was under our bedroom) ceiling with a coat hanger! There are lots of ways to communicate important things. A relative of mine has Amazon Echo Smart Speakers in several rooms of their house, and they can broadcast an announcement on all these speakers at once! "Alexa, tell everyone tea is ready" they say, and all the family knows!

The latest method of communication I noticed

was the other day when I had gone for a walk somewhere near Kerridge Road. There were sheep in a field on the horizon, minding their own business, when a pickup truck drove along the track. A couple of 'beeps' from the truck's horn, and the sheep were on the move – they knew it was dinner time!

There are many more ways of communicating I could mention, but I wonder how God communicates to you? Or rather how do you expect God to communicate with you? I suppose I always imagined it should be in church, through a hymn, or in the Bible that God speaks, and yet so often I am surprised that it's in other places as well! It might be through music – any kind of music, not just hymns and churchy stuff! It might be while watching TV or films. It might be through someone else's words, or even in a look they might give me! It might be a thought that lands in my mind and I have no idea where it has come from! It might be



countless other things too. If I wait in the places I expect God to communicate with me then I'm often disappointed – now don't misunderstand me, sometimes God does speak in the places and times we expect, but I don't think God can be limited in that way! This means we need to listen, wherever we are for God. Listen for God who communicates in words, pictures, feelings, the nagging somewhere at the back of the mind, and innumerable other ways to love us, and guide us, and challenge us, and help us.

Listening to God is, of course, the first step into relationship with God. Henri Nouwen wrote:

prayer is first of all listening to God. It's openness. God is always speaking; he's always doing something. Prayer is to enter into that activity ... Convert your thoughts into prayer. As we are involved in unceasing thinking, so we are called to unceasing prayer. The difference is not that prayer is thinking about other things, but that prayer is thinking in dialogue ... a conversation with God.

As we live out our faith in the world we need to listen for God. This last year has been one of the strangest many of us have experienced, (or ever will!) but God has been communicating with us. The good news is that God will continue to communicate in the weeks, months, and years ahead, as we are reshaped again and again to be a people and a church who faithfully proclaim God's love and grace in the world.



You'll remember the words of the hymn *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind*, particularly the last verse:

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still, small voice of calm.

Where will it be for us? Speak through the coat hanger, Echo, and horn, O still, small voice of calm? Whatever it is, let us commit ourselves to listen.

With every blessing,
Graham

Lockdown easing: I am sure you will have listened to the Prime Minister's plans to ease the current lockdown restrictions with the same hope and cautious optimism as I did. We are exploring the implications of this for our church activities and resumption of public worship. Please bear with us while we work through the guidance.
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 the story of the Jesus predicting his own death – Mark 8 v.31-38.**

Resources are attached.



Easter Eggs for Schools

Would you like to support this campaign?



The Macclesfield Methodist Circuit have teamed up with the Macclesfield Lions to gift an Easter egg to every child in local primary schools in recognition of the resilience the children have shown over the last year, in the way that they have made sacrifices to protect their families and community.

We are currently working with 6 schools in the Macclesfield area who have the highest percentage of children receiving a free school meal. With the six schools we are covering each housing estate in Macclesfield, but not every school within these estates.

Would you like to help support this campaign by donating the cost of an egg, which is £1 per child? With your donations we may be able to offer this to more schools. If so, you can pay your donation directly into our bank account using the reference **Easter Eggs.**

Bank details:

Macclesfield Methodist Circuit

Account Number: 53552667

Sort code: 20-45-45

Ref: **Easter Eggs**

If you would like to donate but do not have internet banking please contact me on 07901777506 and we can sort something out.

Donations would have to be received by Monday 8th March.

Along with the egg the children will receive an Easter card, saying thank you and reminding them that spring is a time for new life, beginnings and hope for the future.

Thanks Angela.

Prayer – in our Circuit Prayer Cycle we remember Gawsorth this week. This prayer has been provided by Frank Bishop.

“Out of the depths I cry to Thee – O Lord God hear my prayer’

As we offer our prayers to you, O God our Father, in these bewildering times, the words of the Psalmist seem so apt.

We come to you with questions in our hearts, but still confident in your good purposes because you are the One who never leaves us or forsakes us.

We continue to pray for the medical profession. For medical scientists and their amazing work in so quickly producing a vaccine.

For the many devoted women and men who are so quickly administering the vaccine in our communities.

We pray for our dedicated Doctors and Nurses working under such intense pressure, saving so many lives.

We remember the bereaved and ask that they may know your comfort and strengthening grace.

We pray for all care and support workers in the vital work that they do.

We lovingly pray for our Circuit, for our Ministers, Graham, Helen and Ros, maintaining their ministries in difficult circumstances. We thank you for the inspiring worship on-line, each Sunday and for the zoom outreach to children and families.

For the Macclesfield Messenger which keeps us in touch and reminds us that we are a family. Thank you for our pastoral visitors and all their efforts to keep in touch with those under their care.

Frank Bishop

On the morning that I wrote these prayers, an ancient prayer from our Methodist Prayer Handbook spoke to me. I leave it with you as it seems so relevant for these times:

“Let nothing disturb or dismay us O God, for all things are passing and you alone are unchanging. All things are wrought in patience, O God, and those who possess you lack nothing, Our sufficiency, O God, is in you alone, now and always. Amen.

Teresa of Avila 1515-1582

Members' voice - by Stephan and Christine Rudolfer (Green Close)

PRAYER WORKS!

“What?? I cannot count the times God has ignored me. SILENCE - TOTAL SILENCE!”

Well, if we BELIEVE that God is our *Immanu-el* (God with us), we KNOW in our HEARTS that His PRESENCE is with us; so, we can LIVE in His presence. Are we ready to do that? Have we not sometimes sent out URGENT prayer darts to Him and not had our pleas answered? If we live consciously in His presence, we are close to Him and He to us. We can TALK frankly to our heavenly Father at any time – sharing, reporting, complaining, asking, doubting, pleading, asking for forgiveness, giving thanks, praising, adoring and loving Him. Such is His love for us that He delights in us coming to Him at any time – there are no opening hours in heaven. Jesus Himself felt the urgency to be in constant contact with His father.

We have the example of the psalmists. ‘*Psalms*’ means ‘praises’. However, the psalmists did not shy away from asking – even arguing with - God when confused, in despair, doubting whether God was aware of their plight. In fact, the psalms display the whole gamut of human feelings. That should be a great comfort to us. We are not alone.

We also find that the psalmists found reassurance that their desperate cries **were** heard. In the end, they felt reassured that “all is well with their souls”. It is as if God had patiently waited for them to come to Him with all their troubles and resentment, so that He could bless them with new strength to trust in Him and hold on to His love and forgiveness.

The psalmists revealed a lot about God and showed us their RELATIONSHIP with Him, trusting and doubting though it may have been. However, we are much more blessed than they were. We have our Lord JESUS on our side. What other hymn expresses this better than *What a friend we have in Jesus*? How often have we sung this hymn concentrating more on the music instead of on the WORDS in that hymn? Let us try and just SPEAK the words:

What a friend we have in Jesus
all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear –
all because we do not carry
EVERYTHING to God in prayer?

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged:
take it to the Lord in prayer!

Can we find a friend so faithful,
who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness –
take it to the Lord in prayer!

Are we weak and heavy-laden,
cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge!
Take it to the Lord in Prayer!
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In His arms he'll take and shield thee,
thou wilt find a solace there.

Psalms and hymns help us to find our way to God, who is always with us AND provides us with the Holy Spirit, who counsels, guides and strengthens us.

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



These pots in our garden were covered in snow four weeks ago, but now some dwarf iris and crocus bulbs have made their way through!



Even the chives have started to emerge.

Jane

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!!

Helen's Blog



Quest for Spirituality

More soon!

Community....

Mission in Britain

Many thanks to all who made donations to Mission in Britain over the past few weeks. I have plenty of marmalade for sale in aid of M in B. If folk would like to get in contact with me on 01625 421188. We can arrange delivery. Also, if you have any empty jars, I would be most grateful for them.

Many thanks Ann Moss

THE WORLD DAY OF PRAYER MARCH 5th 2021

This started in the 19th century in North America when a group of women got together to pray for the world. In the 20th century this movement of prayer was brought to the United Kingdom by Grace Forg. After the war growth was dramatic and today around 120 countries take part. So, on **the first Friday in March, the fifth this year**, women and men around the world will be praying with a service arranged by the women of Vanuatu for their country and for the world.

As the sun rises **on March fifth the Day of Prayer** starts on the international dateline in Samoa. Vanuatu is one of the first countries involved on that day. Then this tsunami of prayer sweeps across the Pacific, touching Fiji and New Zealand. It



rolls on through Asia- Japan and the Philippines, Korea, Bangladesh. The countries of Africa are next and then the Middle East.

The wave of prayer reaches the shores of Europe as our day dawns. Across the Atlantic it moves onwards- the Caribbean, all the Americas and on to the Pacific again until the sun finally sets over American Samoa, where the final service takes place and a worldwide circle of prayer is complete.

THE ISLANDS OF VANUATU

Just over 1000 miles to the east of Australia in the South Western Pacific Ocean are the scattered islands of Vanuatu. This cluster of islands stretches for 400 miles forming a Y shape on the maps and charts. These beautiful islands suffer from cyclones, floods and volcanic eruptions. The climate is hot and humid from November to March ending in heavy rains and cyclones. Then a dry season from April to October when the climate is temperate. The region is rich in sea life but there are no native large mammals or poisonous snakes or spiders. Most of the food is organically cultivated and the beef is the best in the world. The people are mostly Melanesians. Children speak their local language and learn Bislama, English or French in school. Villages are often remote and some children have to walk long distances to get an education or leave home and live in boarding schools.

The world needs our prayers now more than ever.

WILL YOU BE PART OF THIS WAVE OF PRAYER?. This year we shall be unable to meet in local churches as we usually do, but please spend a few moments during March 5th praying for the world and especially for the people of VANUATU. You will be joining millions of people across the world who, in 88 languages, will be praying with you. Then we shall be '**Building the Future on a Firm Foundation**' which is the theme of this year's service.

If you wish to make a gift which will help women across the world and in this country who are in need, please send it to the World Day of Prayer Office, the address is World Day of Prayer Office, Commercial Road. Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2RR

This is the link to their site advertising streaming services for this year on You Tube.
<https://www.wwdp.org.uk>

Sheila Bishop 01625 433239

LENT REFLECTIONS

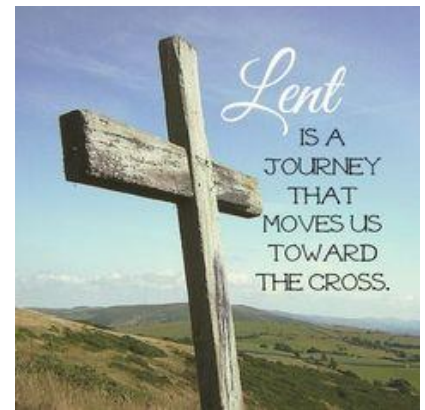
We are running a series of groups across the Circuit, the sessions are not church specific, join whichever fits best for you.

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

We're using the film 'Mary Poppins Returns' to aid our reflections. It's called "Where the Lost Things Go". It's not essential to book, but would help us to know who is coming, so please email Graham with which one you hope to share in.



Monday 7-8pm from 22 February -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83780462936?pwd=WmhPYzZGaTZXdERaMFE2VGZidGRXUT09>

Meeting ID: 837 8046 2936

Passcode: 482365

Tuesday 1-2pm from 23 February -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83759023095?pwd=QTY0eHBUSDdEaTJEUWkzTkJEEdWRMUT09>

Meeting ID: 837 5902 3095

Passcode: 589229

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!

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

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SERVICE LINKS & CONTACTS

Sunday 28 February

AM – Morning worship led by Ros

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

The Reading is Mark 8 v.31-38

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.....

7 March - Graham

14 March - Helen

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

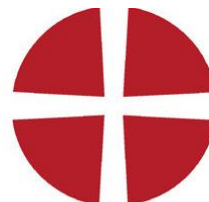


FREE phone lines for prayers and news from the Methodist Church

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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Ministers

Rev Graham Edwards

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Rev Helen Byrne

Tel: 01625 572259

Email: helenmethodist@gmail.com

Rev Ros Watson

Tel: 01625 872060

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