



# The Methodist Church

## United Stockport Circuit (Manchester and Stockport District)

**A Message from the Superintendent Minister**

**March 29<sup>th</sup> 2021**

Dear Friends,

This time I am copying to you the Easter message from the President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference. I couldn't add much further to their uplifting seasonal greeting which reminds us of the hope which is at the heart of the Easter message. All it takes is for me to add my personal greetings and on behalf of all the Circuit Leadership Team in the United Stockport Circuit to wish you all a very blessed and reflective Holy Week and a joyful Easter. It may be that you will be seeing some friends or relatives for the first time in a long time – if that is the case then take care and have fun! If you are spending the holiday on your own or continuing in lockdown then know that you are held in love and prayer by your friends across the Circuit. I hope that you will all be able to join us for worship – either in person or on Zoom – at some point during the festival.

And please remember as always:

**In this time of isolation and separation may we feel the unity of God's spirit in the bonds of peace and love which connect us to one another.**

- 1. When we feel lonely let us know that in Christ we are never alone.**
- 2. When we feel isolated may we be reminded that within the worldwide Body of Christ we are always connected.**
- 3. When we need a hug help us to feel the warmth of God's embrace**
- 4. When we are compelled to keep our distance, may we be drawn close to each other within the Spirit of Companionship that flows from God and which moves through and between each one of us.**

With love and blessings. **Rev Cathy**

## A Message from the President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference

Dear Friends

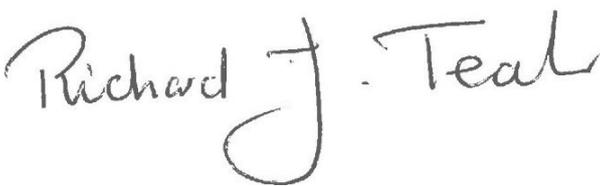
We would like to bring you greetings as we approach Holy Week and to wish you a Happy Easter. This past year has probably been one of the most difficult years many of us can remember and we have all been affected by the Covid pandemic in different ways. We have all experienced the difficulties of lockdowns and restrictions and the losses that accompany those constraints on our everyday lives. We also recognize that some of you will have faced sickness and bereavement as well as concerns over finances, mental health issues and isolation and has in many ways been a wilderness experience for many.

During this Lent season we reflect on Jesus in the wilderness and the lead up to the first Easter, and recall the dashed hopes and dreams of those early disciples as they watched Jesus die, and then celebrate their joy and wonder when their Lord appeared to them again, risen from the dead.

We have been walking a difficult path through this pandemic but just as the longer days, flowers blooming and birds singing remind us that the earth is reawakening after the darkness and gloom of winter, we are reminded that there are signs of hope around us. Those of us who know and love Jesus have found comfort in knowing that he has been walking alongside us even in these difficult circumstances and we are encouraged to lift our heads and fix our eyes on Jesus as we look forward in hope to the future.

We pray that whatever your reflections on this past year, you will know the hope, comfort and peace of the risen Jesus in your heart and life and that you will see those glimmers of light as the dawn breaks. We pray that you will indeed discover the joy of the Lord to be your strength moment by moment and know the truth that 'The best of all is, God is with us.'

With every blessing,



The Revd Richard Teal  
**President of the Methodist  
Conference 2020/21**



Mrs Carolyn Lawrence  
**Vice-President of the Methodist  
Conference 2020/21**

## NOTICES

### ***Worship***

See your local church notices for details but for the time being we are continuing our Circuit wide Zoom service at 3pm on Sundays. Login details as usual as follows:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87212246881?pwd=VXpyMzRYV21UZ1ZoYlkc2R4dmV1QT09>

**Meeting ID: 872 1224 6881 Password: 974333**

### ***Holy Week and Easter***

Some churches will be re-opening for prayer on Good Friday and worship from Easter Sunday (see your local church notices) but there will also be a variety of Circuit wide Zoom events during Holy Week, leading up to Easter Sunday.

#### **Meditations for Holy Week 7pm-7.30pm**

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March, Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> March, Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March, Good Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April, Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> April  
A half hour of reflection, prayer, music and guided meditation led by Revds Cathy Bird and Katie Smith

#### **Maundy Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April 7pm**

Share together in an Agape meal as we recall the events of the Last Supper.

The Agape is a Christian fellowship meal recalling the meals Jesus shared with disciples during his ministry. The service expresses the joy of sharing, belonging and fellowship enjoyed within the body of Christ. If you wish to take part in the service you are invited to have with you a cake, or bread to eat and something to drink. If you wish, you can bake a special Agape Cake! You might like to make Agape Cup Cakes, or a large cake which can be sliced, and leave some on the doorstep of someone who will be taking part in the service but who may not be able to bake. Here is the recipe.

A traditional Love Feast Cake Recipe Adapted from the Middlesmoor Lovefeast Bread used in the Yorkshire Dales at the time of John Wesley

- 1lb (400g) plain flour
- 1oz (25g) baking powder
- 5oz (125g) butter
- 8oz (200g) sugar
- 2oz (50g) mixed peel
- 4oz (100g) sultanas
- 2 eggs
- About half a pint (280ml) of milk

Mix the flour and baking powder together, rub in the butter, then add the sugar, sultanas and peel. Beat the eggs together with a little milk and add to the dry ingredients. Add the rest of the milk to make a soft consistency. Pour the mixture into two loaf tins or a large cake tin. Cook at 180°C (350°F) or gas mark 4 for at least 45 minutes for the loaf tins, or 1 hour for the large cake tin.

**Children's Easter Service: LET'S CELEBRATE EASTER! From Darkness to Life Sat 3rd April 10:30-11:00am**

Eventbrite link for tickets - [https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/childrens-easter-saturday-service-tickets-140263376535?utm\\_campaign=post\\_publish&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=eventbrite&utm\\_content=s hortLinkNewEmail](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/childrens-easter-saturday-service-tickets-140263376535?utm_campaign=post_publish&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eventbrite&utm_content=s hortLinkNewEmail)

#### **Easter Sunday**

Zoom Worship 3pm with special guest preacher Adrian Plass

*All the above Holy Week and Easter events (except Children's service) will use the same Zoom Link as for Sunday Worship.*

## ***Other Notices***

### ***Circuit Prayer***

As we continue into lockdown, let's continue to say this prayer together when we can, at 11am on a Sunday morning if we are not in church. This way we stay connected in a very really and tangible way with all those who are not yet able to come back to church. You can also read more about each church on the Circuit Website [www.stockportcircuit.org.uk](http://www.stockportcircuit.org.uk)

**God of Love and Life, we pray to you this morning for the life the United Stockport Methodist Circuit, for our sisters and brothers who belong to** (*pausing briefly to reflect after each name*):

**Christ Church Methodist /URC , Dialstone Lane Methodist Church , Davenport Methodist Church , Edgeley Community Church , Hazel Grove Methodist Church, Heaton Mersey Methodist , Heaton Moor United Church, Jubilee Methodist Church, (Marple Bridge), Marple Methodist Church, The Ridge Methodist Church, (Marple), Romiley Methodist Church, St. Johns Methodist Church, (Cheadle Heath), Tiviot Dale Methodist Church (centre of Stockport), Trinity Methodist Church, (Bramhall Lane ), Windlehurst Methodist Church (High Lane ), Woodley Methodist Church**

**We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. We ask that this time of crisis might pass and that those who suffer might find comfort and strength within the knowledge of your grace, revealed through the kindness and compassion of the people of God. Eternal God, though the self-offering of your Son you have filled our lives with your presence. Help us in our sufferings and trials. Fill us with hope and strengthen us in our weakness. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**