

S_{outh} E_{ast} D_Urham M_{ethodist}

NEWSLETTER

for Bowburn, Shincliffe and
Elvet Methodists

Sedum:
a family of
small plants
with fleshy
leaves,
found on
rock or bare
ground.



“...I tell you
Peter; you are
a rock, and
on this rock
foundation I
will build my
church....”

APR-MAY-JUN 12

A letter from our Minister

Dear Friends,

“There they will see me” *(Matthew 28:10)*

The first Sunday after the full moon which follows the Spring Equinox may not be marked as such in everybody’s diary, but that is, indeed, Easter Day! The Christian celebration of the Resurrection was at first associated with the Jewish Passover, but, very early in the life of the church, there was a distinct celebration of the significance of what God had done in Christ. Tradition suggests the date of the crucifixion of Jesus as Friday April 7th, and, in reality, it could have taken place anywhere between the year 29 and 33.

Two criminals were crucified alongside Jesus. They had two different requests: one scoffed at him and said, “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”; the other, acknowledging his own guilt and Jesus’ innocence, and maybe seeing something in Jesus beyond the human, asked, “Remember me when you come into your kingdom”. One missed the point and the other showed a faith which led Jesus to say, “Today, you will be with me in paradise”.

Christ born among us, Christ crucified and Christ risen: this is the whole of the good news. The writer DH Lawrence said “to preach Christ crucified is to preach half the truth” and there are those whose lives are so damaged by sin and fear of death that they do not seem able to experience even a taste of the fullness of life Christ promised. As Paul said in his letter to the church at Rome, we must be “dead to sin and **alive** to God”. Easter is the Christian festival which challenges us to think who we are: people who live fully alive or people whose lives are limited by sin and death.

And, Resurrection is not just for the future, we can see and meet the resurrection Christ now: Resurrection from separation, injury and destruction by those who unite, heal and create. Can we see resurrection in the broken friendship which begins to heal?; in the poor receiving not just food but also respect as fellow children of God?; in a congregation of the church, so often told that they are in decline, when they sing the Easter hymns and find new hope as the story is told and lived once more ?

Mary was told to tell the disciples to go to Galilee, “there they will see me”. May we all see the signs of the risen Christ as we journey on this Easter and may we know the joy of being alive to God.

Jane and I wish you all a Happy Easter !

Shaun Swithenbank

Legacy of Rev Kingsley Barrett

It is sad that we will not have this distinguished scholar preaching again. However, on his last visit to Witton Gilbert, Prof Barrett offered this advice on reading the Bible.

First read the Gospel of Mark to get the details of Jesus’ life; then read the First Letter of John, Chapter 1, which gives a list of what Christians believe; follow that up with Paul’s Letter to the Philippians to get some inspiration.

Now you are ready to read the rest of the Bible with a good foundation. Prof Barrett’s system works brilliantly - try it!

WORSHIP



For worship at both Bowburn and Elvet, please consult the Plan or weekly notices. Elvet also has EMU (Elvet Methodist update and the website).

The Big Lunch



The Queen is inviting the nations to join the Big Jubilee Lunch on Sunday 3 June. Millions of people will eat together with neighbours and friends as part of the official Diamond Jubilee celebrations marking the Queen's 60 years of service.

Wondering how your church can get involved? Check out [Hope's promo video](#).

Everything you need to make your Diamond Jubilee celebrations a success - including videos, games, leaflets, the Grace, lesson plans and dramas - is available on the [Hope website](#).

www.elvet-church.org.uk

The church web-site - www.elvet-church.org.uk - has now been up and running for 4 years. 2½ years ago we gave it a major make-over, and there has not been any major change to it since then. We regularly give various aspects of the site updates and, as an on-going process, maintain the diary up to date.

The web-site was set up in the hope that it would be useful outreach for Elvet church, as well as a useful information source for our members. Do make others aware of our web-site. A recent visitor to Elvet said that they came to us, as it was the only Durham church web-site that was up to date!

Our web-site is visited by about 500 people a week. The highest visitor rate was last August – maybe visitors to Durham? This January was also above average for number of visitors. On average the people look at two and a half pages – no doubt many go straight to the page they want, while a few look at many pages. Only a tenth come to us from a search engine (most frequently Google). Rather they come direct to our page, by typing in the web address, or from their favourites list, and a few from links from other pages.

The most frequently visited page is the home page. The next most frequent pages are – in order: *Calendar*; *Services*; *Events*; *Weddings*; and *Find us*. *Benevolence*, *History* and *Project* pages are also viewed regularly.

When you go to the home page - or any other page - you will find a menu on the top left, with 9 main headings. With most of these, if you click on them, they will open to give more detailed options, which lead to the relevant web pages. Most of the pages include words in blue – if you click on any of these, they will take you to the relevant page. If that page is on an external web-site, then the page will open on a different tab in your web browser. So you can switch between that page, and the page on our web-site that you came from.

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On a related issue, we often circulate documents as Acrobat files – also known as pdf files.

Some people have reported problems with reading these.

If double-clicking on these files on your PC does not open them, you probably need to install Adobe Reader. This can be downloaded free from get.adobe.com/uk/reader. The Reader takes up little space on your PC, and any PC can run it easily. If you still have problems, do contact one of the “Elvet Electronic” team.

Could you live on £1 a day?



Surviving on £1 a day is the reality facing 1.4 billion people living below the extreme poverty line, but could you live below the line? The challenge is to spend just £5 on food over 5 days in May, helping to raise awareness of poverty issues and to raise money for MRDF, through sponsorship. You can also host 'Live Below the Line' events: a cooking competition, quiz night or cake sale.

Last year, people who took part in Live Below the Line for MRDF helped to raise over £9,000 for its work with some of the world's poorest communities.

published by Barton, Longman and Todd - a collection of poetry and

A GOOD READ

Do you, like me, enjoy Radio 4's "A Good Read"? Three people gather together each week to recommend favourite and enjoyable books to each other. This quarter, we in Bowburn and Elvet could set up our own "Good Read" as there are three good books to recommend.

The Underground Boys by Joop Buma
(translated from the original Dutch by Jeanette Bygate)

This real-life adventure from occupied Holland during the Second World War had me gripped. The boy heroes play together, but also resist the German invaders, though with only an imperfect understanding of the dangers of their actions. As Allied planes fly overhead night after night, the three boys disable the German anti-aircraft gun - but one of them pays a terrible price for his daring.

Jeanette Bygate is offering this breath-taking adventure story for readers to borrow and return as a fund-raiser for the Elvet project. Or you may, if you wish, purchase the book from Jeanette for £6. I urge you to read this story; the events are all true and Jeanette herself is a minor character in her brother's true narrative.

Mary Jones and her Bible

The Bible Society has just created a "fresh retelling of the story" of Mary Jones, accompanied throughout by Tony Morris's beautiful full-colour illustrations. Mary's determination to have her own Bible led to the foundation of the Bible Society in 1804. Leading Victorians realised that providing Bibles was a necessity for people of all ages, all nationalities and both genders.

The book "Mary Jones and her Bible" is available from the Bible Society if you phone 01793 418100.

Singing the Faith (Sermons on Hymns) by John Tudor

As I write, John Scott is selling this book (and its companion volume, *Sermons for All Seasons*) as a fundraiser for The Elvet Cambodia Project. Forget all fundraising - just read these sermons for themselves! John Tudor incorporates our hymns into his sermons in a way which can only gladden the heart of every Methodist.. For example, the first sermon "The fire shall ever be burning on the altar, it shall never go out" moves convincingly from *O Thou, who camest from above* via *Awake, awake to love and work* to *The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended* and concludes "Till all Thy creatures own Thy sway."

Perhaps John Scott could, like Jeanette, set up a lending library for this interesting book.

WHAT IS A LIVE CHURCH?

A live church has parking problems; a dying church doesn't.

A live church has lots of noisy children around; a dying church enjoys peace and quiet.

A live church often changes the way things are done to do things better; a dying church doesn't need to change a thing.

A live church dreams greater dreams for God's kingdom; a dying church plays it safe and never risks anything.

A live church supports world missions; a dying church says, "Charity begins at home".

A live church uses its traditions and buildings to serve God and people; a dying church uses people to serve its traditions and buildings.

A live church worships; a dying church worries.

A live church forgives and seeks forgiveness; a dying church never makes mistakes.

A live church looks for challenges and opportunities; a dying church looks out for problems and dangers.

A live church evangelises; a dying church fossilises.

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JUST A THOUGHT

One of the Christmas cards I received this year, from an Asian girl in my Year 7 class (first form in old money) had this written on the envelope: "Open with a smile". I did.

MAYBE

Maybe ... we are supposed to meet the wrong people before meeting the right one, so that, when we finally meet the right person, we will know how to be grateful for that gift.

Maybe ... it is true that we don't know what we have until we lose it; but it is also true that we don't know what we have been missing till it arrives.

Maybe ... the happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they just make the most of everything that comes their way.

Maybe ... the best kind of love is the kind where you can sit on a sofa together, never say a word, and then walk away feeling as if it were the best conversation you've ever had.

Maybe ... you shouldn't go for looks; they can deceive. Don't go for wealth - even that fades away. Go for someone who makes you smile, because it only takes a smile to make a dark day seem bright.

Maybe ... you should hope for enough happiness to make you sweet, enough trials to make you strong, enough sorrow to keep you human - and enough hope to make you happy.

Maybe love is not about finding the perfect person; it's about learning to see an imperfect person perfectly. When you do what you can, love will do what you can't.

NEW HOPE FOR CAMBODIA

PROJECT EVENT

Wednesday, 18 April

The Best of British Banquet

New College Restaurant



The children's charity of the Methodist Church

In today's challenging economic times, one in ten children suffers neglect - the most common form of child abuse. Millions of children and young people are growing up without decent food, clothes and the love of a family.

The League of Light

The League of Light, born in 1932, was a nationwide campaign to raise money for the UK's most vulnerable and neglected children. The campaign asked for members to fill a lantern-style collection box with change.

In 2010, home collection boxes raised £500,000. Action for Children is grateful every penny, because every penny will make a difference.

How to join the League of Light

Simply write your name on your church's new League of Light poster and get in contact with your home collection box secretary, whose details you will find on the poster. They will give you a home collection box.

New members will receive a welcome letter, a lantern home collection box designed by a child from an Action for Children project and ... the warm feeling that comes with helping children.

“We really need your help to make a difference to the lives of the 50,000 vulnerable children and young people we work with.”



EDITORIAL

Dear Friends,

I've been off work today - something very rare for me - but I have to acknowledge that I am getting too old to deal with kids' problems in a way that will appeal to them. The laughable thing is that many Elvet members still see me as the student I was when I first transferred my membership forty years ago.

What do young people want from life - and how does spirituality fit into "life as we know it"?

During Lent, we, at Elvet, have been visited by the most prominent of our local ministers - including those who give Radio 4's "Thought for the Day" even!

Rev Dr Calvin Samuel's sermon helped me so much in my Lenten progress - I wonder if he knows - probably not.

We all need to be ready to take on Christian challenges whenever they present themselves - and in whatever way - so that we bring about Christ's mission on earth.

Easter joy and power to you all!

Yours in Christ,

Jackie

FRIENDS (anon.)

I keep making friends over the years so I'll never be left alone.



Friends are your best insurance against loneliness - and, if you're going to live to be 100, that's a long time to be lonely. So, how is your friendship fund now?

In your address book, there are probably lots of names. Cronies and fellow workers ... casual acquaintances you never expect to see again ... people you've loved or liked, people who have loved or liked you. Hang on to them all, no matter how superficial the relationship seems. Tomorrow - such is the magic of time - you'll think of them as real friends because you've known them so long!

Put a star against the true-blues, the steady friends. A true friend is one who goes on visiting you in hospital when everyone else's flowers have faded ... speaks your language ... picks up your line of thought ... tells you in a matter-of-fact way if you have a crumb on your lip ... knows your feelings.

We keep Easter and Christmas, but we don't have a Friendship Day, a time when we send cards with the message: "You are one of my friends and I hope I am still one of yours." To whom would you send cards if we had? If you can't think of a soul, perhaps this is because you have not done what you should to keep your friendships going.

A friend is a priceless possession. Like good wine, friendship improves with keeping. You'll find it's the treasure you value most when you reach your 100th birthday.

Belonging Together

Belonging Together is a three-year project to celebrate and learn from the rich diversity found in modern British Methodism. It is a standing agenda item for the Equalities and Diversity Resource Group. At their autumn meeting, it explored the language of inclusion that best demonstrates unity, not just in policy but in practice. Their favourite words were captured in a wordle and the two most popular words were 'unconditional love'.

The Belonging Together Ministers Group is among many groups who have used Facebook to capture their thoughts on what it means to belong.

To find out what their favourite or most common words are, 'like' our

[Belonging Together page on Facebook](#)

and click on the posted links.

BAPTISMS

We have celebrated Christ's love and welcomed into the Church
Community at Elvet:-

29 January *Ellis Hall*
25 March *Leo MOODY*

Welcome

WEDDINGS

We congratulate and share the celebration of the following couple
married at our church in Elvet on:-

6 January *Derek BELLIS* and *Ruth BROWN*

FUNERALS

Our loving sympathy is extended to the families of those whose
funerals were held at Elvet

7 December *Betty SHEPHERD SUTCLIFFE*
19 January *Marion ASPINALL*
15 February *Kenneth ARMSTRONG*
and at Bowburn
9 December *Broderick ROGERS*

In Memoriam

Christy Ann Witherington

Some Elvet old-stagers will remember Ben and Ann Witherington's time as Elvet caretakers. These lively Americans looked after our church with care and contributed greatly to our fellowship together.

Like others, I remember the birth of their first child, Christy Ann, a beautiful baby. I remember going to the Witheringtons for supper and being astounded at how different American food was from ours and I remember playing with Christy Ann.

How hard it is for those of us who have known the Witheringtons, and who enjoyed their recent return to Durham to realise that Christy Ann is dead.

We hereby reprint some of memorial written about Christy Ann Witherington by her stricken family, in thanks for her life and witness and as an acknowledgement of Ben and Ann's faithful witness for Christ.

Christy Ann Witherington died in her home in Durham, North Carolina of natural causes on Wednesday, January 11th, 2012. Christy was born on August 14th, 1979 in Durham, England, where her parents lived from 1977-1980, while her father pursued his PhD at the University of Durham. Christy graduated from Purdue University in 20002 with a degree in experimental psychology and completed her Masters in Analytics at North Carolina State University in May 2010. From then until her death, Christy worked as a project scheduling consultant for IBM.

PTO

THE BRIDGE OF FAITH

There are bridges we cross in life
To get from here to there.
We cross them as we hurry on
And hardly even care.
Draw and covered bridges
A graceful span or two -
They are never destinations,
We're just passing through.
The bridge of faith is different though
It stretches to our end,
From here to God's eternity
Without a curve or bend.
You cross it in a moment
And find yourself at home
Safe in the arms of Jesus
Never more to roam

We named our girl Christy Ann
A Christian she would be
She crossed before we said goodbye
Her bridge to eternity.
She built her bridge with gracious deeds
She persevered in love;
The final plank was laid in place
By God Himself above.
And as we build our bridge of faith
So we may go there, too.
We call to her across the divide,
"Remember, we loved you."



CRADLE ROLL BIRTHDAYS

April 21st Scarlett Smith (Elvet)

May 16th Leighton Conley (Elvet)

June 22nd Alice Cullen (Elvet)
28th Grace Patterson (Elvet)
29th Jessica Montgomery (Elvet)

JUNIOR CHURCH BIRTHDAYS

April 24th Owen Morris (Elvet)
28th Hugh Morris (Elvet)
28th Flora Jardine (Elvet)

June 21st Daniel Lapham (Elvet)
25th James Davidson (Elvet)

A Happy Birthday To You All

The power of standing together



Christian Aid Week tells the story of a community in Sierra Leone that has seen remarkable change. Tenneh Keimbay's life turned around when the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone (MCSL) started to work in her town, distributing tools and teaching farmers simple food production techniques. She talks enthusiastically about the difference this has made: 'Now the children eat two meals all year round, whereas before it was one. They are growing well; they don't cry around me because of hunger. They are happy to go to school because something is in their stomach.'

The benefits of regular food speak for themselves. But the effects of the food production group have been more wide-ranging than this. Tenneh speaks of the huge difference working in a group has made to her. Acting together, the farmers can share their skills and work more efficiently. As she tells us, the bottom line is that 'the group work provides more food'.

Tenneh speaks of the support and the encouragement that the farmers give to each other, and how much can be achieved when the community comes together. 'What inspires me in life is unity,' she says. 'To me, unity means coming together to decide on one thing and take that forward.'

Now that they are no longer limited by hunger, the people of Gbap (pronounced Bap) have come together and successfully lobbied for a new school and an agricultural work centre for the community. The people of Gbap have taken their future into their own hands.

During Christian Aid Week, 15,000 churches across Britain and Ireland will organise house-to-house collections and events to raise funds to enable organisations like MCSL to carry out their work transforming communities such as Gbap. Christian Aid currently works with 507 partners in 47 countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean, helping people to make change happen. Our donations will be multiplied many times over as many small actions come together to make a huge change. But the giving that takes place during Christian Aid Week is not one-way.

Unity is something that our churches are not always good at, and the value of community that has inspired Tenneh is something that we can learn from and be changed by. Christian Aid Week is about raising funds. But it is also a call to unity - an invitation for churches to come together and celebrate the possibility of hope and life in parts of the world where mere survival can be a struggle.

This is a challenge, because division and inequality and injustice will always be easier than unity. But Tenneh's insistence that remarkable things can happen when we come together is not new. We see it in the actions and ministry of Jesus, who pushed against all that leads to violence and separation and called his disciples to model a new way of community.

Can we use this Christian Aid Week to allow ourselves to be changed? If we can work together, with each other, with our churches and with our neighbours both at home and as far away as Gbap, then we may start to see huge change happen.

Tenneh says that 'when you are a group and work with focus and total commitment, you work at a faster rate; the stronger ones can help with work that weaker ones cannot do by themselves'. As we engage in Christian Aid Week, we can rejoice as we stand together in solidarity. Although we might ask who is the strong and who is the weak - and who is actually giving to whom.

Be a part of Christian Aid Week this year: if, together, we take small actions, we can give people like Tenneh the tools to make big change happen.

£6.50 could buy a set of four hand tools for a farmer living in the town of Gbap.

£50 could pay for advocacy training for two young people in a Kenyan slum, equipping them with the tools they need to pressure their government to provide essential services.

£123 could buy a reclaimed aluminium greenhouse for women working on market gardening projects in Tajikistan, providing a vital tool for growing vegetables in a harsh climate experiencing extremes of hot and cold.



Elvet Communion Collections

Thank you, once again, for your generosity and support.

We have recently contributed to these charities and here are more details about them than we can usually give. Please read and absorb this information, acknowledging that Elvet Methodist Church is a church of outreach to so many.

December/January - Key Project, South Shields - £183.31

February 2012 - The Otters' Swimming Club - £88.40

Durham Otters' Swimming Club has been running for over 25 years in the Durham City area to provide a safe and friendly environment for those who find public swimming baths unsuitable, but would like to swim or relax in a pool.

The charity, run entirely by volunteers, gives disabled adults and children the chance to socialise and exercise in a safe and relaxing environment.

Some members are physically disabled, suffering from anything from back problems to partial paralysis; others are learning disabled, but all enjoy the supportive environment of the club, which uses a shallow pool, a little over 1m deep.

One-to-one care is provided when needed by the swim volunteers, and life-guards are on hand at all times.

The club runs sessions on a Monday evening from 7pm - 8 pm. Kids enjoy the opportunity to play and learn to swim, and adults have the peace of mind in water physical support and company whilst swimming or learning to swim.

With excellent facilities, easy access, a hoist and a range of swimming aids, Durham Otters is one of a few charity services provided to help those who could not swim in a public pool for confidence or mobility reasons.

A Mum/Adult swimmer who has been a member of Durham Otters for 4 years says: "Durham Otters is the highlight of the week for many of children and adults who come along.

More than anything, it is a social activity as well as a relaxing environment for light exercise. All the volunteers are friendly and supportive and will help out or just leave swimmers to their own devices if they want."

Durham Otters' popular children's club is currently full, but the club is welcoming more adults to come along for the session.

For more information on Durham Otters contact:

John or Kirstine Chamberlayne (0191) 386 2146

We will be contributing to these charities in the coming months.

March 2012 - Hearing Dogs for the Deaf

Hearing Dogs for the Deaf is a national charity and centre for excellence in training dogs to alert deaf people to everyday household sounds and danger signals in the home, workplace and public buildings.

The charity trains hearing dogs to alert deaf people to important household sounds and danger signals such as the alarm clock, doorbell, telephone and smoke alarm providing independence, confidence and security as well as a valuable companion.

Nearly nine million of the UK population experience some degree of hearing loss. Over half a million are severely or profoundly deaf. Hearing Dogs for Deaf People want to help as many of these people as possible by creating life changing partnerships between deaf people and specially trained dogs.

The breeds they train to become hearing dogs are typically Labradors, Golden Retrievers, Cocker Spaniels, Miniature Poodles and Cavalier King Charles Spaniels.

Each hearing dog takes around eighteen months training.

Hearing Dogs was launched in 1982 and there are currently over 750 working partnerships in the country.

April 2012 - Samaritans

Samaritans is a confidential emotional support service for anyone in the UK and Ireland.

The service is available 24 hours a day for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.

Volunteers offer support by responding to phone calls, emails and letters. Alternatively, people can drop in to a branch to have a face to face meeting.

Samaritans have been helping people in distress since 1953.

The service is provided by around 18,750 unpaid volunteers who work from 201 branches all across the UK and Ireland.

Samaritans are contacted more than five million times in one year - that's once every six seconds.

May 2012 - Christian Aid

Christian Aid insists the world can and must be swiftly changed to one where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty. They work globally to eradicate the causes of poverty, striving to achieve equality, dignity and freedom for all, regardless of faith or nationality. They are part of a wider movement for social justice.

PTO

They provide urgent, practical and effective assistance where need is great, tackling the effects of poverty, as well as its root causes. Their essential purpose is to expose the scandal of poverty; to help in practical ways to root it out from the world; to challenge and change structures and systems that favour the rich and powerful over the poor and marginalised.

June 2012 - Mercy Ships

Mercy Ships are hospital ships that reach out to the world's poorest people. With operating theatres and a 40 bed ward, the vessels become an 11,701 tonne floating hospital, carrying a volunteer crew of 350 from all over the world. This organisation exists as a compassionate response to a world need. On ships and land bases, dedicated volunteers bring their wide-ranging skills to promote health and well-being by serving the urgent surgical needs of the forgotten poor and by empowering developing communities.

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CHRISTIAN AID EVENTS

The following fundraising events for Christian Aid will be taking place in April and May:

Thursday 12th April 2012

Collection at Tesco Extra, Dragonville, Durham, 10.00am to 4.00pm

Sunday 13th to Saturday 19th May 2012

Christian Aid Week

House to House Collection covering roads in the 'Rosemount' area of Durham

Collection at Durham Railway Station on Thursday 17th, Friday 18th and Saturday 19th May.

For these efforts to be successful volunteers are needed. The Tesco Extra and Railway Station collections only require a small amount of time. No-one would be expected to be involved with these collections for a whole day, though if anyone was willing to do this then they would not be turned away!

Please give careful consideration to helping out with these events. If you are willing to donate some of your time as well as some of your money to help Christian Aid then please see me at Elvet or contact me by 'phone (0191-386 8297) or e-mail (davidramsden7@hotmail.com)

Ten Little Methodists

Ten little Methodists went to church when fine,
But it started raining - then there were nine.

Nine little Methodists stayed up very late.
One overslept himself - then there were eight.

Eight little Methodists on the road to heaven,
One joined a rambling club - then there were seven.

Seven little Methodists heard of Sunday flicks.
One thought he'd like to go - then there were six.

Six little Methodists kept the place alive.
One bought a television - then there were five.

Five little Methodists seemed loyal to the core.
The Minister upset one - then there were four.

Four little Methodists sang the service through -
Got a hymn they didn't know - then there were two.

Two little Methodists disputed who should run
The next Harvest Social - then there was one.

One faithful Methodist, knowing what to do,
Got a friend to come to church - then there were two.

Two sincere Methodists each brought in one more.
So their numbers doubled. Then there were four.

Four sturdy Methodists simply couldn't wait
Till they found four others. Then there were eight.

Eight eager Methodists searching round for souls -
Praying, working, witnessing - draw others in by shoals.

Shoals and shoals at every service, cramming every pew -
O GOD,
supply this grace and zeal in my own circuit, too.

THE INTERVIEW WITH GOD



I dreamed I had an interview with God.

“So, you would like to interview me?” God asked.

“If you have time,” I said.

God smiled. “My time is eternity. What questions do you have in mind for me?”

“What surprises you most about humankind?”

God answered:

“That they get bored with childhood, rush to grow up - and then long to be children again.

That they lose their health to make money ... and then lose their money to restore their health.

That, by thinking anxiously about the future, they forget the present, so that they live in neither the present nor the future.

That they live as if they will never die - and die as though they had never lived."

God's hand took mine and we were silent for a time.

And then I asked, "As a present, what are some of life's lessons you want your children to learn?"

"To learn that they cannot make anyone love them. All they can do is let themselves be loved.

To learn that it is not good to compare themselves to others.

To learn to forgive by practising forgiveness.

To learn that it only takes a few seconds to open profound wounds in those they love - and it can take many years to heal them.

To learn that a rich person is not one who has most, but one who needs least.

To learn that there are people who love them dearly, but simply have not yet learned how to express or show their feelings.

To learn that two people can look at the same thing and see it differently.

To learn that it is not enough that they forgive one another - they must also forgive themselves."

"Thank you for your time," I said humbly. "Is there anything else you would like your children to know?"

God smiled and said: "Just know that I am here ... always."

ECO NEWS**LOOKING AFTER OUR PLANET ?
WHY THE HEDGE SHOULD WE ??**

A harvest dormouse

In Britain we have half a million miles or so of hedgerows. They provide a vital ecosystem for many creatures.

A survey by the local authority of North Devon counted 600 species of flowering plants, 1500 species of insects, 65 species of birds and 20 species of mammals at large in the county's hedges.

A network of hedgerows across the countryside provides protection for farmland birds and bats and a safe haven for rare species like the hazel dormouse and the great crested newt.

But, since 1950 approximately 118,000 miles of hedgerow have been lost, and it was only in 1987 that legal protection - the Hedgerow Regulations - were introduced.

So, with Benjamin Franklin , we say :

**"LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR,
YET DON'T PULL DOWN YOUR HEDGE !!!"**

THE WEEK IN BOWBURN

Sundays	10.30 am	Morning Worship and Sunday Club
Tuesdays	5.30 pm	* Kid's Club
Wednesdays	2.00 pm	Women's Fellowship (1st and 2nd in month only)
	2 - 3 pm	Prayer & Fellowship Meeting last Weds of month.
Thursdays	9.00 am	* "Drop-in" <i>* term-time only</i>

THE WEEK AT ELVET

Sun	8.30 a.m.	Second Sunday, Holy Communion
	10.45 a.m.	Morning Service & Junior Church , including crèche
	6.00 p.m.	Evening Worship
	7.30 p.m.	MethSoc (term time)
Mon	2.00 p.m.	Prayer Meeting (2nd & 4th Mon)
	6.00 p.m.	Cubs (Open Group) [Boys and Girls 8-10½]
	7.30 p.m.	Guides (Open Group) [Girls 10-16] meets at St Giles'
	7.30 p.m.	Explorers (Open Group) [Mixed 14½-18]
	7.45 p.m.	Housegroup at Newton Hall (alternate wks)
Tue	10.15 a.m.	Halliday Grove House Group (alternate wks)
	5.30 p.m.	Beavers (Open Group) [Boys and Girls 6-8]
	7.10 p.m.	Scouts (Open Group) [Boys and Girls 10½-14½]
Wed	2.00 p.m.	Women's Fellowship (1st & 3rd wks)
Thurs	10.00 a.m.	Arts & Crafts Workshop
	7.45 p.m.	Thursday Club for All (alternate wks)
	7.45 p.m.	Shincliffe Housegroup (alternate wks)

ELVET and BOWBURN METHODIST CHURCHES

Minister:

Rev Shaun Swithenbank BSc

Tel: 384 8755

and

University Chaplain

Rev. Julie Lunn, BEd, MA

Tel: 384 7950



DON'T FORGET

Copy for the **July – September** Newsletter
should reach Jackie Fielding by

May 27th

via the pocket in the rear entrance hall at **Elvet**,

by phone on Durham 384 7305

or by e-mail at fielding@durhamcity.org.uk

Alternatively, those at **Shincliffe** and **Bowburn** can contact

Liz Atkinson on Durham 377 0687.