

S<sub>outh</sub> E<sub>ast</sub> D<sub>U</sub> rham M<sub>ethodist</sub>

# 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.....”

DEC 07 - JAN 08

*A letter from our Minister**Dear Friends,*

Big changes are on the way for the Durham and Deerness Valley Circuit. Next August we shall lose from the ministerial staff the Revd Walter Attwood, who will become a supernumerary, and the Revd Paul Wood, who will move to another appointment. These moves will mean a reduction of staff for the Circuit, caused partly by the national shortage of ministers, but necessary anyway because all our churches are feeling the pinch financially. In place of the two ministers who are leaving, we anticipate that only one will be coming to the Circuit.

The Circuit Meeting has therefore had to address the difficult question of how our reduced ministerial resources can best be used. Apart from one minister who serves half-time, all of those who are at present appointed to the Circuit will be taking on different and/or additional responsibilities. This inevitably means that the ministerial jam will be spread more thinly.

Our two churches, Elvet and Bowburn, already share a Newsletter. As from September 2008, they will also share a minister. The Revd Julie Lunn will continue with her work as Methodist Chaplain to the University and, jointly with the Revd Andrew Lunn, she will have the pastoral oversight of North Road and Bearpark churches. I will be taking on pastoral oversight at Bowburn in Julie's place, while retaining responsibility for Elvet and the role of Superintendent.

If you suspect that this means that both churches will see less of their minister than they do at present, then you suspect correctly! I hope it goes without saying that I shall do my best to

lead worship regularly in both churches (while also getting around the Circuit, as I need to do), to be available when needed, and to provide the leadership and care that are needed. But I can't be in two places at once! It will be important for us to establish priorities within the life of our churches and for me to develop a modified pattern of work in order to meet our changed circumstances. I ask for your prayers as we prepare for next September, for me and the other ministers, for our two churches and for the other fourteen churches of our Circuit.

Yours sincerely,

*Neil Dixon*

**Cribs of the World**  
in aid of NCH the children's charity

An exhibition of 200 Nativity Scenes on loan from Libby Purves will be held at Brunswick Methodist Church, Newcastle from 18th – 23rd December, 2007.

Open to the public 10am – 4pm daily  
and 6pm – 8pm Tuesday - Friday evenings  
including Cribs by Candlelight on Thursday 20th December  
at 6pm

with a  
Service of Worship around the cribs  
on Sunday 23rd December at 10.45am

Entry by donation  
Refreshments for sale

For more information and group bookings, contact Brunswick Methodist Church – 0191 232 1692

## WORSHIP IN DECEMBER

### Bowburn

- 2nd 10.45 a.m. Deacon Anne Ellenor  
 9th 10.45 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Julie Lunn  
 16th 10.45 a.m. Miss H. Stott  
 23rd 10.45 a.m. Rev Julie Lunn  
**25th 10.45 a.m. CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE**  
 30th 10.30 a.m. Readers' Service

### Elvet

- 2nd 10.45 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Neil Dixon  
 6.00 p.m. Rev Julie Lunn and Rev R. MacSwain  
 9th 8.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Heather Taylor  
 10.45 a.m. Rev Kenneth Mankin  
 6 p.m. Mr Bill Offler  
**16th 10.45 a.m. Mrs Frances Proud - All Age, Parade and  
 Gift Service**  
 6 p.m. Holy Communion - Rev Neil Dixon  
**23rd 3 p.m. Carol Service - Rev Neil Dixon**  
**24th 11.30 p.m. MIDNIGHT COMMUNION**  
**25th 10.30 a.m. CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE - Rev Neil  
 Dixon**  
 30th 10.45 a.m. Rev Neil Dixon  
 6 p.m. Readers' Service

For **WORSHIP IN JANUARY**  
 please consult the plan.

A poem by Gilbert Thomas



Who has not carolled Mary,  
And who her praise would dim?  
But what of humble Joseph?  
Is there no song for him?

If Joseph had not driven  
Straight nails through honest wood,  
If Joseph had not cherished  
His Mary as he should,

If Joseph had not proved him  
A sire both kind and wise,  
Would he have drawn with favour  
The Child's all-probing eyes?

Would Christ have prayed 'Our Father',  
Or cried that name in death,  
Unless he first had honoured  
Joseph of Nazareth?



## EDITORIAL

Dear Friends,

May I begin by wishing all our readers a very Happy Christmas and much joy in the New Year.

Doesn't news always seem to be negative? Our prayer requests, too, are always for those in trouble and difficulty. Perhaps we should focus on the positive. Isn't that what the Christmas season brings us year after year?

I hope that you will enjoy this edition. We have an update on the Ten Commandments, very positive news about Elvet's project in Cambodia, prize-winner's news from one of our expert gardeners, progress on the Elvet website by our most dedicated and industrious team and lots of positive news and ideas from *The Buzz*, the Methodist Church's positive news website - go to [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk). We also have jokes and fun provided by a reader. What can you offer SEDUM? Remember Christmas is the time to offer gifts? What are yours? Are they writing skills which as editor of SEDUM could use - or are they other, useful for other branches of the church?

Is your Christmas about what you receive or about what you give? Is what you give material or could you offer talents to the Church and the wider world? I hope I've made you think - and thank you to the wonderful contributors for this issue. This newsletter is always what you make it - and what you make it is wonderful.

*Jackie*

**Pam Cooper** would like to thank the members of the Elvet congregation for all the love and support shown following her mother's tragic death in Dryburn Hospital on September 17th.

A very special thank you to Pat and Chris Webb who have been towers of strength, to Julie Lunn for a beautiful sensitive service which was a great comfort to me and to Rosemary Williams and Pat Johnson.

Many thanks.

Pam Cooper

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### WORTH A VISIT



During the summer holidays, I took a fairly standard trip to the Lake District. I'm sure many of us did. One place I visited was Hawkshead - how long is it since I was last there? I renewed my acquaintance with the Methodist Chapel, a tiny place and the oldest place used for Methodist worship anywhere in the world. It is charming and interesting - and I highly recommend a visit to all my readers.

### ELVET FAMILY A NATIONAL TRIUMPH



Gordon and Mavis Allanson's garden in Tudhoe Village has won **first prize** in a national competition. The competition to find "Britain's Best Border" was organised between May and September by *Garden Answers* magazine.

Gordon and Mavis's garden was judged to contain "Britain's Best Border", as published in the November issue of *Garden Answers*.

Our hearty congratulations to Gordon and Mavis on the well-deserved recognition for their garden success. They open their lovely garden regularly to raise money for charity - and I, for one, have certainly been delighted (and, maybe, a bit envious) to see it.

It is an especial delight to record this success, if we bear in mind how recently Gordon has recovered from illness. Let this be a lesson in positive thinking and the benefits of the active lifestyle to us all.



Joanne and John Woods would be pleased for friends to know that Anna is to be married to Nigel William Darling, son of Mr and Mrs John Darling, West House, Sacriston, at St Michael and All Angels, Witton Gilbert on Saturday, 2nd February, 2008.

## 9

### News from "The Buzz"

Good news from the Methodist Church all over the country

#### **LEARNING AND CARING "Your tea's ready!"**

from Hexham Trinity Methodist Church, Tynedale Circuit

On Thursday evenings at 5pm we all meet in church, children and adults, and have our tea together. It has proved highly popular with the elderly, and those just getting out of school. We charge £2 for adults and £1 for children, and £2 for children who eat like adults! We then have separate programmes: the children do fun things like watching Christian videos (after a hard day at school) and the adults have a Bible study or a talk. Numbers have reached over 40, with families from other churches, or no church at all, joining in because they have been invited by friends.

Email contact: The Revd David Flavell -  
mailto:david@voteforjesus.co.uk

#### **SERVICE - The Spoken Word**

from Galloway's Society for the Blind, Preston Circuit

Thirteen years ago we started producing weekly taped recordings of the Methodist Recorder and sending them out to blind and partially sighted people. Today, over 500 people throughout the UK receive either a tape, CD or a digital copy. We also produce many other publications, including the Reform magazine for the United Reformed Church, The Universe Catholic Newspaper and the Salvation Army's War Cry. This is what happens when the Lord gives you a push to do something!

The recordings travel Free Post via Royal Mail and once 'read' are returned to us in the special wallets for recording again the following week. The service is free of charge to users, but costs us about £12,000 a year to run. Amazingly, this is somehow always met through donations from local churches and recently, a wonderful legacy of £5000 from a former listener in Wales!

Email contact: Peter Taylor - mailto:peter.taylor@galloways.org.uk

Email contact: Paul Spencer -  
mailto:paul.spencer@galloways.org.uk

Mailing address: Galloway's Society for the Blind, Howick House,  
Penwortham, Preston PR1 0LS, 01772 744148

**Elvet goes Electronic!**

No, we are not referring to the clavichord or other musical instruments, but to making use of electronic means of communication to members & friends of Elvet (in addition to traditional methods!). A working party recently submitted proposals on this matter to Church Council, which gave the go-ahead for implementation. This involves two activities:

- ❖ Establishing and maintaining an Elvet web site to give detailed information about activities and to provide a link to and from other web sites (such as the Tourist Office, Christian Aid and the Cathedral).
- ❖ Making greater use of email, especially for keeping in contact with friends at a distance and those who do not regularly attend worship.

Of course, there already is a circuit web site, <http://www.durhamdeernessmethodist.org.uk>, which has a page on Elvet Church (but this only contains semi-permanent data, not current events). Our own web page would link to this but would include information about the week's activities, special events, items from our "monthly update", perhaps even the SEDUM newsletter.

As for email, we envisage separate email lists, depending on the people concerned. One category might be regular members, another might comprise friends and family members living at a distance, a third might be people who get married at Elvet or have children baptised there. The nature of information sent and the regularity of emails would depend on the category. Of course, email is a two-way system and anyone would be able to contact the church that way. We know some people are reluctant to have their email addresses on lists, but in this case, the lists would NOT be generally accessible and would only be known to the operators of the system, so we hope people will be happy to join in.

The advantage of these developments will be efficient “advertising” of our existence and the facilities/activities at Elvet to a potentially very wide range of people. They will form part of our outreach!

All readers of SEDUM are invited to play their part. For a start, we need a name for our website.

*Ideas, anyone?*

Secondly, it is essential that the web site is updated very regularly (preferably weekly) and emails will need to go out on a regular basis. We need 3 or 4 people to act as operators. Training will be provided!

*Volunteers (we have one already)?*

We urgently need as many email addresses (with approval of the addressees!) as possible.

*Let us have your email address and suggestions for others.*

**[[There is an email address to which we ask you to respond.]**

***‘Sedum@westgrangefarm.co.uk’***

Penny & Steve Bissell and John Chamberlayne will be setting up the web site.

*If you (or a church organisation you belong to) have ideas for content:*

*Let them know as soon as possible.*

We believe and hope that this initiative will have very positive long-term results for Elvet.

Robin Harris (anything@robin.bbmax.co.uk)

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***Ha-ha!*** (an intermittent season of jokes)

*Wandering round the local supermarket the old lady was seen by the chairman of the local soccer team which had been playing very badly all season. He went over to her and politely asked, “Can you manage?”*

BAPTISMS

We have celebrated Christ's love and welcomed into the Church Community by Baptism:

30th September **Taviah Cara COBURN** (at Elvet)

7th October **Adia Louise Griffiths** (at Bowburn)

*Welcome*



WEDDINGS

We congratulate and share the celebration of those married in our church at Elvet on:

22nd September **William RUBIE** and **Rachael HUDSON**

3 November **Peter MORGAN** and **Lee CLATWORTHY**

*Congratulations.*



FUNERALS

Our loving sympathy is extended to the families of the following whose funeral services were held at Elvet

11 October **Bob BYGATE**

25 October **Joe HUTCHINSON**

*In Memoriam*

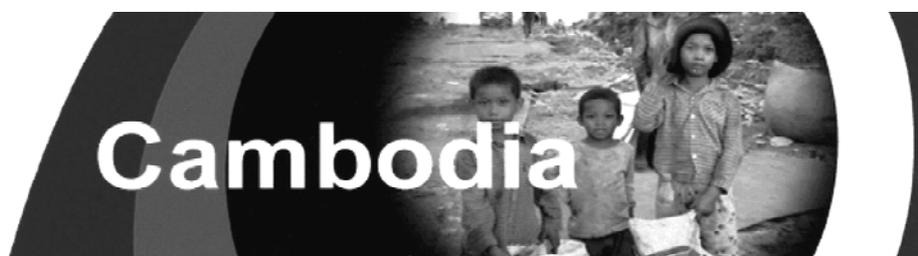


**Cambodian Street Children**  
Elvet Methodist Church Project 2007-8



With a feeling of some pride (and of even more amazement!) we can reveal that the total donated to the Project had passed the £6500 by mid-November – and will probably be even more by the time you read this. A very big thank-you must certainly go to all those who have contributed in any way so far.

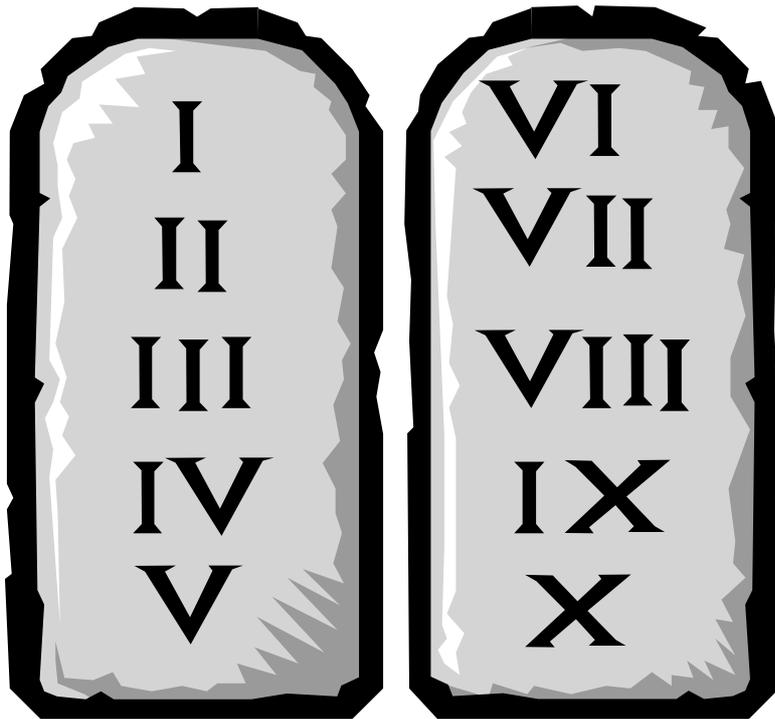
Global Care estimated their “shortfall” on the Cambodian Street Children programme to be about £19000. In no way have we set this figure as our target, but it would be something for Elvet to be truly proud of if we could say next summer that we have “wiped out the debt”, as it were, of a truly worthy cause. (If you don’t believe that last bit, ask Anne or John Scott, who have been there and seen it for themselves ... and for Elvet!)



## ***MY TEN COMMANDMENTS***

by Elodie Armstrong

1. Thou shalt not worry, for worry is the most unproductive of human activities.
2. Thou shalt not be fearful, for most of the things we fear never come to pass.
3. Thou shalt never cross bridges before you come to them, for no-one has ever succeeded in accomplishing this.
4. Thou shalt face each problem as it comes. You can handle only one problem at a time anyway.
5. Thou shalt not take problems to bed with you for they make very poor bedfellows.
6. Thou shalt not borrow other people's problems. They can take better care of them than you can.
7. Thou shalt not try to relive yesterday for good or ill - it is gone. Concentrate on what is happening in your life today.
8. Thou shalt count thy blessings, never overlooking the small ones, for a lot of small blessings add up to a big one.



9. Thou shalt be a good listener, for only when you listen do you hear ideas different from your own. It's very hard to learn something new when you're talking.
10. Thou shalt not become bogged down by frustration, for 90% of it is rooted in self pity and it will only interfere with positive action.

***More news from "The Buzz"***

**LEARNING AND CARING - Fishponds' Fun Day**

From Fishponds Methodist Church, Bristol

Why should children be the only ones to enjoy a Holiday Club? That was the thinking behind our decision to run a 'Fun Day for the Elderly' with an activity day and a separate outing. We offered a morning of handicrafts, music, local history, carpet skittles and a session of simple exercises. Then, after lunch together, entertainment and an epilogue drawing the whole day to a close. We later had an outing to the Wye Valley and the Forest of Dean. Lovely weather, scenery and fellowship.

These days have proved to be very successful. We have opened it to those linked in any way to our church and to local ecumenical partners. Most of those who come live alone and enjoy the company as much as the activities.

E-mail contact: Church Steward - <mailto:marycb@blueyonder.co.uk>

Phone contact: 0117 9654 521

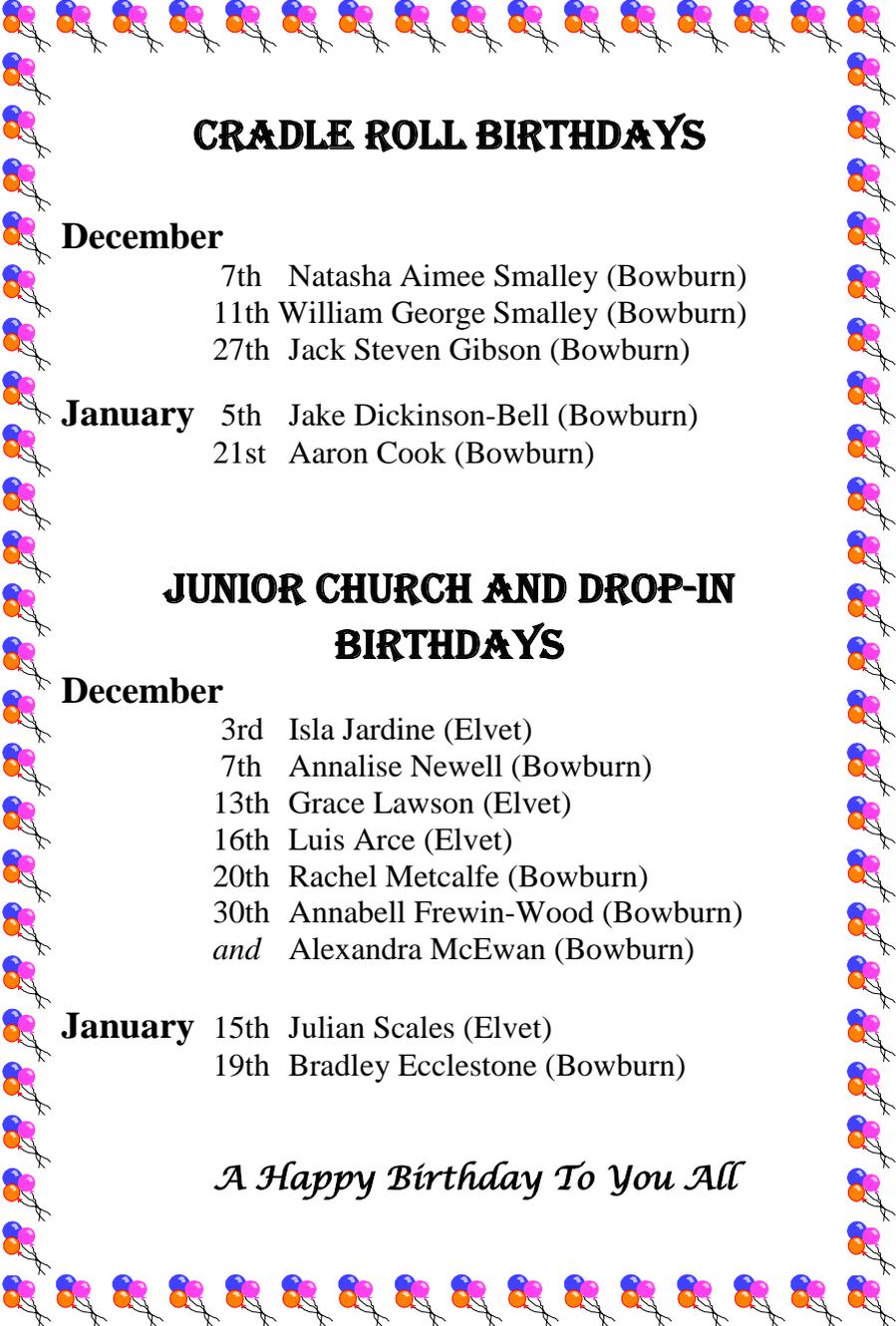
**YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS ISSUES WITH THE  
PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT VIA THEIR WEBLOG**

When Martyn Atkins, President of the Methodist Conference, began his weblog following this year's Conference, he said that 'One of the most important tasks for the President and Vice President is to talk and listen to people'.

Talking is, of course, a two way experience and you are invited to visit the weblog and learn what Martyn and Vice President, Ruby Beech, are doing during their year in office. Hear about places they visit, the people they meet, the things that concern them, the issues they raise and, most importantly, join in discussion with them.

As Ruby said 'John and Charles Wesley travelled thousands of miles on horseback to meet people...This weblog will allow us to discuss things with people all over the world, and to share our experiences'.

<http://www.methodist-presandvp.blogspot.com/>



## CRADLE ROLL BIRTHDAYS

### December

7th Natasha Aimee Smalley (Bowburn)  
11th William George Smalley (Bowburn)  
27th Jack Steven Gibson (Bowburn)

**January** 5th Jake Dickinson-Bell (Bowburn)  
21st Aaron Cook (Bowburn)

## JUNIOR CHURCH AND DROP-IN BIRTHDAYS

### December

3rd Isla Jardine (Elvet)  
7th Annalise Newell (Bowburn)  
13th Grace Lawson (Elvet)  
16th Luis Arce (Elvet)  
20th Rachel Metcalfe (Bowburn)  
30th Annabell Frewin-Wood (Bowburn)  
*and* Alexandra McEwan (Bowburn)

**January** 15th Julian Scales (Elvet)  
19th Bradley Ecclestone (Bowburn)

*A Happy Birthday To You All*

**ELVET COMMUNION STEWARDS**

Communion collections at Elvet for December will be donated to the **Sunbeam Trust**. Many thanks to all donors.

**ENCIRCLED IN CARE - A WONDERFUL RESOURCE FOR THOSE IN OUR CHURCHES CALLED TO CARE FOR OTHERS**

Pastoral visitors and all those who care for others will find a wealth of material and practical tools to use in many situations in this brand new comprehensive resource - *Encircled in Care*.

*Encircled in Care* is produced in a partnership between the Methodist Church and the charity, MHA, and contains three foundation sessions, focussing on why we care, skills needed in our caring and the development of good practice. There are nine issue-based sessions, covering some of the situations that pastoral visitors might need to respond to or be involved with, including mental health issues, loss and bereavement and pastoral care across the generations. The pack also contains a CD-ROM with PowerPoint presentations of each session, as well as the text of handouts and prayers.

The Revd Dr Keith Albans, Director of Chaplaincy and Spirituality for MHA says, 'The quality of our caring is a sign of God's love and witness to others that Christians have something distinctive to offer a broken world that needs healing and reconciliation. *Encircled in Care* challenges us and offers the tools with which to fulfil that calling'.

*Encircled in Care* is available from mph at <http://mph.org.uk> for £16.99 plus postage. More information can be found at:

<http://www.methodist.org.uk>

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**Alison and Mike Crampton** would like to thank members of Elvet Church for flowers, kind messages, cards and prayers on the death of Alison's father at the end of October.

**THE WEEK IN BOWBURN AND SHINCLIFFE**

Sundays	<b>10.45 am</b>	<b>Morning Worship</b> (Bowburn)
	5.30 pm	Evening Worship (Bowburn) on some Sundays - see notices
Tuesdays	5.30 pm	* Kid's Club (Bowburn)
Wednesdays	2.00 pm	Women's Fellowship (Bowburn) (1st and 2nd in month only)
	<b>2 - 3 pm</b>	Prayer & Fellowship Meeting (Bowburn), <b>last Weds of month.</b>
Thursdays	9.00 am	* "Drop-in" (Bowburn) * <i>term-time only</i>

**THE WEEK AT ELVET**

Sun	8.30 a.m.	Second Sunday, Holy Communion
	<b>10.45 a.m.</b>	<b>Morning Service &amp; Junior Church, including Crèche</b>
	<b>6.00 p.m.</b>	<b>Evening Worship</b>
	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] <b>meets at St Giles'</b>
	7.30 p.m.	Explorers (Open Group) [Mixed 14½-18]
	7.45 p.m.	House Group at Newton Hall (alternate weeks)
Tue	10.00 a.m.	City House Group (alternate weeks)
	10.15 a.m.	Halliday Grove House Group (alternate weeks)
	5.30 p.m.	Beavers (Open Group) [Boys and Girls 6-8]
	7.10 p.m.	Scouts (Open Group) [Boys and Girls 10½-14½]
	8.00 p.m.	House Group at Gilesgate (alternate weeks)
Wed	2.30 p.m.	Women's Fellowship (1st & 3rd weeks)
Thurs	10.00 a.m.	Arts & Crafts Workshop
	7.45 p.m.	Thursday Club for All (alternate weeks)
	7.45 p.m.	House Group at Shincliffe (alternate weeks)

**ELVET and BOWBURN METHODIST CHURCHES**

**Ministers:**

Rev Neil Dixon BA MPhil

Tel: 384 8755

and

Rev. Julie Lunn, BA, MA

Tel: 377 8089

**DON'T FORGET**

Copy for the **February - M:**  Newsletter  
should reach Jackie Fielding by

**6th January**

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](mailto:fielding@durhamcity.org.uk)

Alternatively, those at **Shincliffe** can contact  
Jim Harper on Durham 386 4360.  
Those at **Bowburn** can contact  
Liz Atkinson on Durham 377 0687.