

S_{outh} E_{ast} D_U rham 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.....”

JAN - MAR, 2010

A letter from our Minister

Dear Friends,

For most of my life, I have had a well-developed tendency towards nostalgia – looking back on earlier days with affection. But maybe in my case this is not truly nostalgia, for many memories are tinged with sadness and regret, as well as pleasure.

From 1975 to 1984, I was the minister of Burley-in-Wharfedale Methodist Church. My wife, Julie, and I went to Burley just a year after our marriage, and both our children were born while we were there. In many ways, it was an extremely happy time – ministering in a lively and growing church, working in amicable ecumenical partnership with other local churches, being part of a strong and supportive Circuit team. I have so many memories to cherish of those years.

Shortly before our departure in 1984, a morning service was broadcast live from Burley on ITV. Twenty-five years later, in October 2009, the church decided to show a video recording that had been made of that service, and to invite us to tea first! It was in many ways a lovely occasion – meeting old friends, catching up on news, sharing memories, rejoicing in the new developments that have taken place within that church and its community.

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But it was not without sadness. Inevitably, the video film included shots of many, many people who had since died – some within months of the broadcast service; one only a few days before the 2009 service. And the occasion was not without embarrassment; seeing myself as I was a quarter of a century ago and having to listen to this now unrecognisable person preaching a sermon was even worse than I had expected!

I guess that most of us find that our memories are mixed, and that exercises in nostalgia often result in the recalling of events or conversations or experiences that are not uniformly heart-warming.

There is a sense in which the Universal Church constantly engages in nostalgia, a rehearsal of memories; and here too there is joy mingled with sadness. The rehearsal of memories to which I have referred takes place in the regular, repeated recalling of God's mighty acts in creation and redemption, and especially in the life and death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Church's memory includes the joy of Christmas and Easter, but also the sadness and anguish of Gethsemane and Calvary. It is a sign of the complexity of the Church's memory that we refer to the day when Jesus was crucified as 'Good' Friday.

Sometimes, in our private lives and in our deepest relationships, we need what some people call 'the healing of memories'. But, in the providence of God, it is often in the recalling of his great and wonderful deeds – in our sharing in the Church's act of remembrance – that we receive healing and wholeness.

With every good wish,

Yours sincerely,

Neil Dixon

WORSHIP IN JANUARY

Bowburn

- 3rd 10.30 a.m. Readers' Service
10th 10.30 a.m. Rev Paul Golightly
17th 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Neil Dixon
24th 10.30 a.m. Mrs Mary Tribe
31st 10.30 a.m. Miss Dorothy Hale

Elvet

- 3rd 8.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Neil Dixon
10.45 a.m. Readers' Service
6.00 p.m. Rev Neil Dixon
**10th 10.45 a.m. Rev Neil Dixon -
Covenant and United Service**
6.00 p.m. Rev Kenneth Mankin
17th 10.45 a.m. Mrs Frances Proud
6.00 p.m. Holy Communion - Rev Neil Dixon
24th 10.45 a.m. Mr Bill Offler
6.00 p.m. Rev Neil Dixon
31st 10.45 a.m. Rev Neil Dixon
6.00 p.m. Rev Julie Lunn and Methsoc

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY

Bowburn

- 7th 10.30 a.m. Mr P. Leake
14th 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Neil Dixon
21st 10.30 a.m. Mr Bill Offler
28th 10.30 a.m. Rev Neil Dixon

Elvet

- 7th 10.45 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Neil Dixon
6.00 p.m. Prof Mark Wilson
14th 8.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Neil Dixon
10.45 a.m. Mrs Norma Nevin
6.00 p.m. Rev Ruth Gee
21st 10.45 a.m. Mr Eric Watchman
6.00 p.m. Holy Communion - Rev Neil Dixon
28th 10.45 a.m. Rev Peter Phillips
6.00 p.m. Rev Neil Dixon & Rev Julie Lunn - Taizé

WORSHIP IN MARCH

Bowburn

- 7th 10.30 a.m. Mr Eric Watchman
14th 10.30 a.m. MOTHERING SUNDAY
Prof Mark Wilson
21st 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion -
Rev Neil Dixon & Rev Nigel Johnson
28th 10.30 a.m. Rev Peter Phillips

Elvet

- 7th 10.45 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Neil Dixon
6.00 p.m. Mr John Scott
14th 8.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Neil Dixon
10.45 a.m. MOTHERING SUNDAY
Mrs Anne Offler -
All-Age Worship and Parade
6.00 p.m. Rev Neil Dixon
21st 10.45 a.m. Mr John Farish
6.00 p.m. Holy Communion - Rev Kenneth Mankin
28th 10.45 a.m. Rev Paul Golightly
6.00 p.m. Mrs Margaret Wadge

From David Wilkinson's Radio 4 "Thought for the Day"
on September 28th, 2009

The comedian Jeff Allen says that teenagers are God's revenge on mankind, as if God says 'let's see how they like it to create someone in their own image who denies their existence'.

A parent knows just how messy it is in keeping the tension between the respecting of freedom and appropriate intervention for the greater good. Indeed, holding such a tension as the world community considers an appropriate response to Iran's nuclear programme is not easy. Yet it is important. Too much intervention and you deny the possibility of an individual or a state growing in responsibility. No action at all and the message is given that you don't really care.

**As a member of the Methodist Church
I am called to:**

worship within the local church, including regular sharing in Holy Communion, and through personal prayer

learning and caring, through Bible study and meeting for fellowship, so that I may grow in faith and support others in discipleship

service, by being a good neighbour in the community, challenging injustice and using my resources to support the Church in its mission to the world

evangelism, through working out my faith in daily life and sharing Christ with others.

*My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is
made perfect in weakness*

2 Corinthians 12:9

BRITISH METHODISTS SUPPORT DISASTER VICTIMS IN INDONESIA, SAMOA AND TONGA

An appeal for prayer and funds for victims of the tsunami and earthquake tragedies has been launched by the Methodist Church in Britain.



SAMOA

In 5 minutes, the tsunami claimed at least 140 lives in Samoa, many of them children. One couple lost all four of their children and there are eight babies being cared for in the local hospital who are motherless. With many people losing multiple members of their families, their support networks in times of grief and crisis have also been shattered as everyone on such a small island is connected in some way.

Five Methodist churches in the area were destroyed. Ministers, their families and many of their congregations are not only homeless, but churchless too. However, this did not stop them having worship in their tents on the first Sunday after the disaster struck.

The main concern now is the health of those who have survived. Because they are camping out, clean water and sanitary issues are major problems and the health services are preparing for illnesses and diseases that will follow. The priority is to try and build some temporary homes along with sanitary facilities.

The Samoan Church has specifically asked us to help them rebuild their churches and homes for their ministers.

Steve Pearce, partnership coordinator for Asia and the Pacific, said, "It is clear that the Church will be heavily involved in the recovery both spiritually and pastorally in the weeks to come."



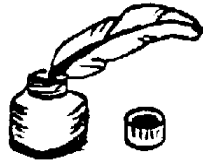
TONGA

A state of emergency was declared in Tonga for Niuatoputapu, the closest island to Samoa with a population of around 1,000 people. The islanders of Niuatoputapu have been badly hit by the tsunamis and earthquakes which have rocked the area. Food, clothing and kitchen utensils have been sent and the general secretary of the Free Wesleyan Church in Tonga has travelled to the area to make an assessment of the situation.

INDONESIA

In Indonesia, the main centre of the earthquake damage has been in Padang on the island of Sumatra. Shocks were felt over a great distance and the damage and loss of life has been frightening.

Continued on page 11.

**EDITORIAL**

Dear Friends,

Yesterday I said “Bless you!”, as you do, to a student who had sneezed. His immediate quip was “I’m not religious” and I apologised, saying that the response was almost automatic. At this, he reflected, and said, “I didn’t mean it; I am religious.”

I am not sure what this scenario reveals about religion - about my religion and the student’s religion. I am timid, but a 17-year-old in Middlesbrough has a sense of the omniscience and omnipresence of God. How humbling!

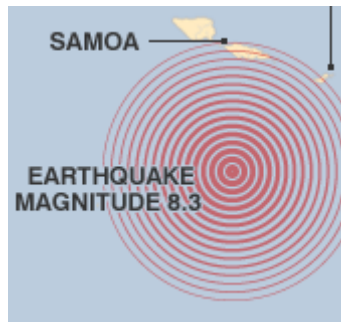
In the spirit of exalting others, may I say a big thank you to those who organise and help in so many church events? I shall now seem prejudiced, because I shall select events which particularly pleased me. I thoroughly enjoyed Elvet’s Church Family Party back in September and, as usual, I loved the Elvet pantomime. I used not to like pantomimes much, but “Walton Straus’s” re-workings of the traditional tales always have a message for us. This year, the message was the importance of friendship and it is a good message for any time of year.

Let us work on friendship and empathy. A kind word, truly meant, can never go astray.

My best wishes to you all.

Jackie

Continued from page 9



Steve continued, "We have heard news that the only Methodist church in Padang is completely destroyed. The cost of rebuilding is at least £14,000. Can British Methodist Churches raise this? We have sent an initial solidarity grant and will respond further to our Partner Church as their need becomes clearer. I have assured the church and its members of our prayers and support." The Church's World Mission Fund has already sent £15,000 to aid the relief work of Partner Churches in the region.

We want to be able to send more but we need your help. You can donate online at <http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=opentoworld.content&cmid=1492> to the appeal or send cheques made payable to the World Mission Fund to Dave Bennett, Fundraising Coordinator, Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR. Postal donations should include a note saying 'Pacific Appeal'.

Members of the Pacific Churches have thanked the Methodist people in Britain for their support. In an email one said, "It is so good to know that so far, far away, people and friends are thinking and praying for you."

Further information is on the Methodist Church website at <http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=opentogod.newsDetail&newsid=385>, including a prayer suitable for use in church services.

Your money really is making a difference

From Beverley School in Middlesbrough

Elvet Project 2008 -9

A quick note to keep you up to date of how we are spending your wonderful donation. This term we have run a 6 week science club after school and this was for pupils within our primary department. During this club pupils have had the opportunity to explore the ideas and concepts of science through fun practical activities. Pupils have explored chemical volcanoes, giant bubbles, slime, rainbows, helicopters and paper planes. The club has allowed our pupils to extend their thinking and most importantly enjoy carrying out science experiments. We have also run a 6 week 'multi sports' club for our younger secondary pupils. We employed 2 sports coaches from 'Simon Carson Sports School' and along with our staff pupils have experienced a variety of sports in a fun and safe environment, they have also benefited from expert coaching.

Next term we have planned a music club, Design Technology club and possibly a music therapy club. Your money really is making a difference.

Regards

Jane May

Assistant Head Teacher

The Bible helps
News from the Bible Society

The Chief Scout, **Bear Grylls**, says that he depends on just a few Bible verses which he has learnt by heart to help him through the tough times .

Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan have been requesting Bibles from their chaplains more than ever before.

In **Nigeria**, Bibles will be given to politicians who will be told, “This is the Word of God, use it as a compass in governance”. Corruption is, unfortunately, endemic in Nigerian politics. Rev Dr Fred Odutola said, “It’s easy for politicians to be swept away by the stream of affluence. There are so many allowances for them to claim - it’s easy for them to forget where they come from and who they are.”

I think our own politicians may need Fred’s help. JF.

Four Worms and a Lesson to be Learned

A minister decided that a visual demonstration would add emphasis to his Sunday sermon.

Four worms were placed into four separate jars. The first worm was put into a container of alcohol. The second worm was put into a container of cigarette smoke. The third worm was put into a container of chocolate syrup. The fourth worm was put into a container of good clean soil.

At the conclusion of the sermon, the minister reported the following results: the first worm in alcohol - dead; the second worm in cigarette smoke - dead; the third worm in chocolate syrup - dead. The fourth worm - in good clean soil - alive!

So the minister asked the congregation, “What did you learn from this demonstration?”

Maxine was sitting at the back. She quickly raised her hand and said, “As long as you drink, smoke and eat chocolate, you won’t have worms.”

That pretty much ended the sermon.

*Well done to Rebekah Lapham
and to Grace Lawson for having their poems
published in an anthology of poems called
"I have a dream".*

Take Action!
Calling all supporters!



Did you know that you can now order all the materials for your Action for Children fundraising events and activities through the brand new area on our website called "Take Action"?
Simply visit www.actionforchildren.org.uk, click on "What you can do", then click on "Take Action".

We also now offer an exciting range of personalised gifts in our new online shop.. At least 10% of each transaction will go to Action for Children. Just visit www.actionforchildren.org.uk, then click on "Online Shop".

www.actionforchildren.org.uk

Typing Errors

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community.
Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say 'Hell' to someone who doesn't care much about you.

Potluck supper Sunday at 5pm - prayer and medication to follow.

This evening at 7pm there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the Congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.

Sunday Club, Bowburn

The Sunday Club is a new-ish venture at Bowburn Church. It started as a table in the back of the Sunday service with some pictures and colouring pencils for a 3 year old. From this we have grown into a small Sunday School with 6 regulars, albeit from 3 families! The children are aged between 1 and 7 years. We meet in the Church Hall at the same time as the morning service and have been following the 'Roots' programme. We have 2 leaders, CRB checked and the Mum of the 1 year old also joins with us. We are starting to get 'outside' interest now, thanks to the work of the Kids' Club/Messy Church (Tuesday evenings) and the 'Drop in' (Thursday mornings). We ask for your support and prayers for the Sunday Club as we are being led into the next phase.

Jo Davison.

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Time Out, Space Apart

Lochhouse Farm Retreat Centre

**Accommodation Beattock - Moffat - Bed & Breakfast -
M74 Junc 15 - Holiday Cottages Southern Upland Way -
Pets welcome Southern Scotland**

Situated just off the A74(M) access is easy yet once there you feel miles away from the stresses of everyday life.

The centre consists of B&B in the farm house, 2 self-catering cottages & a meeting room/small conference centre. It's run by Mary & Martin Brown (some may know Martin as he worked for Rob Frost with the seed teams) both active Christians in their local community. I met Mary & Martin some 20 something years ago as a student when I lived in Wimbledon and attended the same Methodist Church. Since they bought the farm we've had holidays in the B&B and one of the cottages and I can certainly recommend their hospitality & Martin's home cooked food.

NATIONAL CHURCHES TRUST



The National Churches Trust is dedicated to supporting and promoting places of worship used by Christian denominations throughout the UK. It awards grants for the repair of historic buildings and/or for the installation of facilities benefiting the wider community in buildings of any age. Although grants have gone mainly to Anglican churches in the past, the trust works for the benefit of all denominations.

Details are available from National Churches Trust website, <http://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/>.

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I do not want the peace that passeth understanding;
I want the understanding that bringeth peace.”

Helen Keller

METHODISTS WIN AT THE BLOG AWARDS

Two Methodist blogs received awards at this year's Christian Web and New Media Awards.

The Revd David Perry Chair of the Lincoln and Grimsby District won the award for Best Christian Blog and the president and vice-president's blog came runner-up in the Most Inspiring Leadership Blog category at a ceremony in London in late September.

David Perry's blog at <http://davesdistrictblog.blogspot.com/> combines his stunning photography with spiritual reflections. "Like the colourful flower, my images attract traffic to the blog which I might not otherwise get," said David. "What I hope is true is that all leave with a little bit of incidental gospel pollen clinging to them. Even one tiny grain of grace, love and hope gathered here by chance, in something seen or read might be a God-given gift to someone who needs it."

The president and vice-president's blog at <http://www.methodist-presandvp.blogspot.com/>, documents the travels and experiences of the president and vice-president of the Methodist Conference, as they spend a year visiting Methodists around the UK and much further afield.

Why not add these blogs to your favourites and keep up to date with what is happening in Methodism in cyberspace?

Lami Nnamonu

DEAR ELVET

It's a fact that Elvet is never for long without criticism, some justified, some not. (And yes, there speak two of the outspoken critics!) But these criticisms are for the most part directed at Elvet as an ecclesiastical organisation.

On the other hand, comment of any sort on Elvet as a church family is rare by comparison.

So it is with the greatest of pleasure that we would like to praise the Elvet Family for the way it took to its heart our 'adopted daughter' Lami Nnamonu and made her stay in Durham a time to treasure ... as you can see from the accompanying article by the lady herself.

She came from a C of E/Church of Nigeria background (but we don't hold that against her!), being actively involved in the cathedral in her home town, but was uncomfortable with the atmosphere in our cathedral (unlike in Nigeria they don't dance during services!) and started to look round to see what other churches had to offer.

The warm welcome given to her by Elvet 'smote her mightily'. People seemed to go out of their way to make her welcome (unlike in the Cathedral) and so she stayed with us. (And let's face it, her very open and loving nature made her extremely easy to love in return.)

For a long time, though, she was never completely sure of her overall reception among us and several times wondered what people might be thinking of 'that African woman' [her own choice of words, by the way: she may perhaps have already encountered that reaction elsewhere], especially when we asked her to read a lesson and take an active part in the prayers during one morning service. Afterwards, though, she was bowled over by the number of people coming up to her and saying how much they had enjoyed her contribution. She hadn't realised how many people knew her, but, as we pointed out, it wasn't difficult to explain as she was the only coloured person in the church and, at the same time, by far the most colourful – definitely 'unmissable'! And if she still had any lingering doubts then her last Sunday morning at Elvet and her last night at our housegroup next day certainly dispelled them, with people queuing up to wish her God speed, tell her with genuine sincerity how much they would miss her and to have their photo taken with her! Now she was definitely going to be 'missable'!

We (along with a goodly number of others) feel extremely sad now she has gone but very privileged to have been her adoptive parents here in Durham, having gained so much that has enriched our lives through getting to know her so well – but equally we feel extremely proud of Elvet for having taken her to its heart and making her one of us.

Thank you, Family!

John & Jeannette Bygate

Elvet Methodist Church - The True Body of Christ.

Some may call it serendipity. I call it divine leading.

And so it was that on 23rd November, 2008. I was led to Elvet Methodist Church, Durham (members of the Brancepeth Close House group know the details of this leading).

A warm handshake, a genuine smile at the entrance! Straight after matins, I was invited to the church Hall for tea!! Then she walked up to me... (I soon observed that she does that to every first time worshipper whether she's on duty or not) and Jeannette Bygate gave me yet another invitation... this time to the house group on Monday!!! That wasn't all, John Bygate & Chris Webb came to pick us up for the meeting (the former dutifully continued to do that all year round, only later assisted by Mary Hogg.)

These might sound usual, but not to me and certainly not to my young German friend of Vietnamese origin (*Mai Huong Nguyen*), who was in church for the first time in her life on that day.

That was how my 'membership' of the big family called Elvet started. We (Mai & I) were quickly adopted into the Bygate family. (I lived first in the Japanese Shoichi Hall and then in the Moorlands, Gilesgate, but our **home** was at No. 32 Neville's Cross, if you know what I mean!) This note is not about the Bygates because only God Almighty can fully, truly reward them for their innumerable acts of kindness. But it is to the whole congregation of the Elvet Methodist Church, especially – in no particular order – Patricia/Alvaro Arce, John/Anne Scott, Chris/Pat Webb, Sue/Bram Cartwright, Kathleen Hall, who jostled for a Sunday when we were 'not booked' (or at the Bygates'!) to take us home to lunch; Robin/Maureen Harris, The Cramptons and all the members of Brancepeth Close House group (the surprise send-off party was simply wow!).

A smile here, a hug there ... you (Elvet Methodist Church – **all of you**) made the stresses of academic research life look like a piece of cake. I am back in Nigeria and I can truly say you made my Durham experience worthwhile. I was even included in the church mailing list and had information addressed to **me**! Total acceptance. It was wholesome and awesome. That, I believe is what the true church is all about.

I'll recommend Elvet Methodist Church to any international student (or visitor) going to Durham. Every aspect of my life was touched positively. Suffice it to say that I've been impacted to impart.

I remain eternally grateful. Thanks and God bless you all. Please keep the fire burning.

BAPTISMS

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

At Elvet

Caitlin Rhiannon EDWARDS Sept 27th

Scarlett Christina SMITH Nov 1st

At Bowburn

Becky Kayla GIBSON Oct 18th

Welcome



FUNERAL

Our condolences to the family and friends of

Michael BALL

whose funeral was held at Elvet on Oct 23rd

Harvest Baptism

It was a special morning for baby Caitlin,
not that she knew anything about it –
it was her Christening;
it was a special morning too for the congregation –
it was their Harvest Festival service.

Sunlight poured through tinted glass,
casting a cascade of iridescent colours
on walls, on brown wood, on faces,
on bunches of flowers, baskets of fruit
bread, potatoes, packets of rice,
tins of peas, tins of soup;
and on baby Caitlin
and her proud parents.

“We Plough the Fields and Scatter” was gustily sung,
a cadence of choral and common voices,
soaring to the panelled ceiling,
as the sonorous scales of the organ,
gloriously and majestically,
resonated throughout the church.

It truly was a special morning:
a morning for celebrating
nature’s bounteous store,
the coming and going of the seasons,
and the spark and kindling
of a new life.

Les Holloway
September 2009

A MESSAGE FROM THE BALL FAMILY

Martin, Lesley and Janet Ball wish to thank everyone for the prayers, sympathy and support following their recent bereavement. The cards, flowers and kind messages are very much appreciated. Many thanks to everyone who made a donation to the British Heart Foundation in memory of Michael - the grand sum of £752 was raised.

When we remember Michael please think of all the money he helped to raise for the Church project.

For many years Michael was one of the main providers of plants for the Annual Plant Sale. The work started in January growing plants from seed and continued into May with plants taking over the house, the greenhouse, garden shed and the garden. Every inch of available space was taken over by them! Tending to this many plants was very labour intensive and time consuming.

Although Michael was a member of the Property Committee for a few years, his voluntary electrical maintenance work spanned over thirty years. He knew every nook and cranny in Elvet from crawling under floors to working in the rafters. He played a major part in the re-ordering of the Church, designing the new lighting system and constructing the lighting panel as well as some of the installation work. The panel was made on the family dining table which was out of action for weeks!

In the wider community, Michael was treasurer of St, Oswald's Scout Group , a post he took on when Martin was a scout there. He continued in this voluntary post for another twelve years after Martin had left the Group! Although a lot of hard work was involved in these voluntary activities, Michael was happy doing things that would benefit others.

The Ball Family.

CIRCUIT ECO GROUP
report by Jeannette Bygate

Our brand-new Circuit Eco Group met for the first time on October 22nd. We gathered at the Manse, 52 The Avenue, for that saved lighting and heating at the church!

It was a good meeting and in the (near) future you can expect to hear a lot more about our responsibility in this respect as a church and as individuals. (You might even find an article about it in this very newsletter.)

As Jackie (and a lot of others) I also like hymns; so can I put in a special request for a modern hymn with a familiar tune ("The Vicar of Bray")? Words and arrangement © The Iona Community, 1989.

Sing praise to God on mountain tops
 And in earth's lowest places,
 From blue lagoon to polar waste
 From ocean to oasis.
 No random rock produced this world
 But God's own will and wonder.
 Thus hills rejoice and valleys sing
 And clouds concur with thunder.

Sing praise to God where grasses grow
 And flowers display their beauty,
 Where Nature weaves her myriad web
 Through love as much as duty.
 The seasons in their cycle speak
 Of earth's complete provision.
 Let nothing mock inherent good
 Nor treat it with derision.

Sing praise to God where fishes swim
 And birds fly in formation,
 Where animals of every kind
 Diversify creation.
 All life that finds its home on earth
 Is meant to be respected.
 Let nothing threaten, for base ends,
 What God through grace perfected.

Sing praise to God where humankind
 Its majesty embraces,
 Where different races, creeds and tongues
 Distinguish different faces.
 God's image in each child of earth
 Shall never pale or perish.
 So treat with love each human soul
 And thus God's goodness cherish.

Cambodian Street Children

Elvet Church Project 2007-8: An update



Cambodian Street Children. Remember this - our most successful church project to date - helping to provide food and education for those unfortunate children whose families' only means of support meant the kids had to spend long dangerous hours sifting through the foul rubbish on the town rubbish dump outside Phnom Penh?

Prospects seemed good for the kids as a result of our aid, but there was always some uncertainty about the future of the Dump. This news, via the latest Global Care Newsletter, makes for sad reading.

CAMBODIA

It's a bleak time for our families at Stung Mean Chey as the dump has been closed down.

In the long term we hope this will prove to be good news, but in the short term our support is needed more than ever as most of these families have now lost their only source of income.

Their immediate future is very uncertain. A new dump has opened 15 km outside Phnom Penh, where the government insist rubbish pickers must be licensed; no-one is allowed to live on or near the dump; NGOs and foreign visitors are banned,

A handful of our families are applying for licences and commuting each day to the new site, but this action is out of the question for most families. Instead, they face a significant loss of income, and have few positive alternatives.

At this uncertain time the work of the New Hope Centre in educating these poverty-stricken children is more important than ever. All the children are still attending the centre regularly and staff are considering ways of developing new vocational training options which would help the families generate new income.

It is good to know that the New Hope Centre is still going strong. We hope and pray that it will continue for as long as it is needed.

John and Jeannette will keep us posted about any further developments, knowing that Elvet really took this project to heart.



CRADLE ROLL BIRTHDAYS

January 5th Jake Dickinson-Bell (Bowburn)
8th Sophie Barnes (Bowburn)
11th Billie-Jean Dawn Smith (Bowburn)
22nd Cara Mae Moody (Elvet)
23rd Holly Sandra Dunn (Elvet)

February
2nd Ryan Jackson (Elvet)
9th Helena Ruby Davison (Bowburn)
10th Kyle Caiden Corner (Bowburn)
16th Thomas James Churchman (Elvet)

March 14th Thomas William Mann (Elvet)
20th Alfie Jayden Chilver (Bowburn)

JUNIOR CHURCH BIRTHDAYS

January 15th Julian Scales (Elvet)
19th Bradley Egglestone (Bowburn)

March 4th Lisa Cave (Elvet)
8th Callum Hall (Elvet)
24th Ella Rose Ferguson (Bowburn)
25th Rebecca Carter (Elvet)

A Happy Birthday To You All

ELVET COMMUNION STEWARDS

Communion collections at Elvet will go to the following charities this quarter.

JANUARY 2010 - Help the Aged - This is an international charity fighting to free older people from poverty, isolation and neglect. They support vulnerable older people in over 50 countries. Their mission is to work for disadvantaged older people. The group carries out research into their needs, campaigns for their rights, and provides vital services. In April 2009 Help the Aged joined with Age Concern to provide a national charity dedicated to improving the lives of older people.

FEBRUARY - Crisis - This is a national charity for single homeless people. There are many ways in which Crisis aims to help these people, eg, Crisis Skylight offers a variety of activities for homeless people and the general public; Crisis Christmas opens its doors in 7 centres across the UK over the Christmas period; the Crisis Supportive Housing model provides innovative solutions to homelessness while creating high quality, affordable homes for low-income essential workers, and formerly homeless adults; in addition to many other schemes. Crisis established its first Skylight Learning and Activity Centre outside London - in the North of England, at Newcastle upon Tyne.

The centre, in City House (City Road, NE1 2AF) opened its doors to members in April 2007. Crisis Skylight Newcastle combines free practical and creative workshops and more formal learning opportunities leading to qualifications and employment. Classes include art, singing, jewellery making, digital photography, pottery & ceramics, sculpture, car maintenance, acoustic guitar, IT & job skills.

MARCH - Action for Children - Action for Children supports and speaks out for the most vulnerable children and young people in the UK. They support families at critical times and with difficult problems. They help find carers for children who can't live with their families. They help vulnerable and excluded young people. They provide specialist help and support for disabled children and in their schools they help children and young people reach their full potential. In 2009 the society celebrated 140 years of helping the UK's most vulnerable children.

APOLOGY. In the last edition it was stated that the December collections would be for 'Riding for the Disabled', whereas this was in fact the charity that we collected for in October. The December collection was for 'Bibles in Braille'.

THE WEEK IN BOWBURN

Sundays	10.30 am	Morning Worship and Sunday Club
Tuesdays	5.30 pm	* Kid's Club
	5.30 pm	"Messy Church" (1st in month)
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.	House Group at Newton Hall (alternate weeks)
Tue	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]
Wed	2.00 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

Minister:
Tel: 384 8755

and
University Chaplain
Tel: 384 7950



DON'T FORGET

Copy for the **April - J une** Newsletter
should reach Jackie Fielding by

February 28th

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