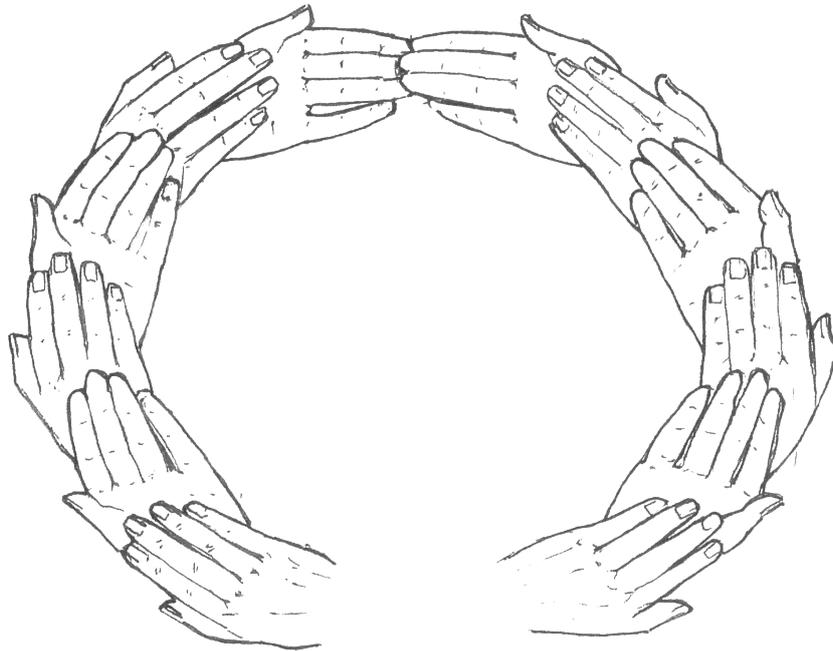


# The Link

MAGAZINE

for Bowburn, Framwellgate Moor,  
North Road and Elvet Methodists



June, July, August '20

## *A Letter from our Minister*

*Dear friends in faith,*

It is my delight to be asked to write to you. There has never been a time in the church where communication is as valued in ministry. We are seeing things change, the way society functions and sees itself and the change is rapid. I think people are reflecting more about their lives than ever before because social distancing has forced the world to slow down. People are looking after their neighbour, taking the shut-ins food and shouting through the windows. Before those neighbours may not have been on a name sharing basis. The illness is scary, the anxiety is real, so too is the loneliness and isolation. Yet, I am filled with hope for our churches and think many of the difficulties we are addressing at this strange time are reminding the world about the golden rule and most obviously the importance of loving our neighbour.

Within the congregations I have pastoral charge over there is a wide range of people. Quite a few work so hard to keep the church running and I have noticed the trend in most churches that more and more jobs are falling on fewer and fewer shoulders. Before lockdown started, I imagined, as we were grappling with the possibility of being in isolation, that if we treated a time away from gathering like a sabbatical it might help us to return in the future with a fresh perspective. Read those books you have not got around to, check out what the national church is offering online, study the scriptures, call one another to talk about a matter of faith or a particular passage, pray all the time but in a way that makes you feel connected to God in communication in the most positive way. I truly think that the perspective we gain will be the substance of what we should be doing as a church. People are going to be hungry for community contact; our church must have the widest doors. We cannot return to the same place where our key leaders are overburdened. Let's

cut out some stuff we have done and aim instead for something new that our fresh perspective informs.

The first commandment Jesus explains in the golden rule isn't to love the neighbour; it is just the first one most of us remember. It is what we can see in the news that warms the heart while fear and anxiety would want to chill. Look at how people are looking after one another and thank God. The first commandment in the rule is, "Hear oh Israel." Jesus is commanding us to listen and that is what I am spending as much time as possible doing. I am listening for God's voice in the news, the silence, my boys' fussing, I am hearing it in the way neighbours love, and I am calling my congregations and hearing their stories. My favourite recent conversation was from a parishioner who missed gathering at Easter so much he wanted to plan a meeting to celebrate *Cross Dressing*. I am really open minded but my wife's clothes won't fit. After a bit of laughter, I realised he wanted to decorate a cross with flowers as we normally do at Easter whenever we determine it is safe to do so. But sometimes to hear God's joy, to laugh with your neighbour, it demands you take some action. Get on the phones when you have a spare few minutes and try and reach people. Listen; know that God's voice is in each communication if we listen well.

The other lost commandment in that text is to love yourself. Jesus says love your neighbour as yourself. If you are having a hard time with something, get over your British reserve and reach out. I would love to hear from you. Take care of your bodies, your mind, your soul. Exercise, reach out, pray, study the scriptures and develop your relationship with God. I hope when we gather, we will see the value of this time because we used it well. When we return to gathering, I hope we will become something better than before and God is helping that to happen. Listen, hear, love and take care.

*Peace in Christ,*

*Rev John*

# WORSHIP

*Churches throughout the U.K. are temporarily closed because of the coronavirus pandemic.*

*Nonetheless, there are opportunities for shared worship and prayerful reflection online, by phone, on the radio and on T.V.*

*Readers can, no doubt, find information about T.V. and radio programmes through the usual channels, but here I have listed some other worship resources known to me. I hope you find the information useful; please let me know if you too have found a good worship resource.*

The Methodist Church website

[methodist.org.uk](http://methodist.org.uk)

Go to “Worship during the pandemic”.

Live-streamed services

Choose between Methodist Central Hall, Wesley’s Chapel London and Swan Bank Methodist Church.

You can follow the service live or at a time of your choosing following the live broadcast.

Durham Cathedral is streaming live and past services, and daily prayers, on Facebook, and you don’t have to have a Facebook account to access them. Type Durham Cathedral Facebook into your search engine.

If you don’t have or prefer not to use the Internet, Bishop Auckland Methodist Church has a “Circuit Worship Phonenumber”. Just ring 01388 436815 to hear a sermon on the week’s lectionary readings. I’ve tried, it’s good!

Or, ring 0800 804 8044 for Daily Hope, a free phonenumber of hymns, reflections and prayers.

## **Bowburn**

The congregation at Bowburn has been following Andy Longe's blog and joining in with Andy and Bill Offler's zoom service at 3p.m. on Sunday afternoons.

Zoom: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/2160947133>

Skype: <https://join.skype.com/invite/nZefzuXLZkla>

Blogging:

<http://www.godlifechurch.wordpress.com>

Volunteers to help with the service are very much appreciated.

## **Elvet**

Congregation members are accessing national and local worship facilities (and I hope that this round-up will help many at all our churches to explore the wealth of worship which is out there).

## **Framwellgate Moor**

As many at Fram. do not have internet access, everyone has been really focussing on phoning to keep in touch and assure each other of prayer.

## **North Road**

North Road has been putting together a "virtual" service week by week. Email [northroad1853@aol.com](mailto:northroad1853@aol.com) to receive the service which includes audio files, as well as written material.

*Use Elvet and North Road Facebook pages to access up-to-date information and Revd John's weekly reflections.*



A reader has contributed this lovely poem. Do you know it?  
I do because my pastoral visitor sent it to me at Easter.

I said a prayer for you today  
And know God must have heard –  
I felt an answer in my heart  
Although He spoke no word!  
I didn't ask for wealth or fame  
(I knew you wouldn't mind)  
I asked Him to send treasures  
Of a far more lasting kind.  
I asked that He'd be near you  
At the start of each new day  
To grant you health and blessings  
And friends to share your way  
I asked for happiness for you  
In all things great and small –  
But it was for His loving care  
I prayed for most of all.

Another thought from the same source - thank you, reader, for  
your contributions - and remember that you can combine words  
and giving by phoning people and giving your time to talk to  
them.

*Kindness in words creates confidence;  
kindness in giving creates love.*

## The Church Garden

Like any garden, the Church needs to be planted out with seed if it is to produce a harvest. The following suggestions can help us to make our Church what it ought to be:

First, plant five rows of 'Peas' -

Presence

Promptness

Preparation

Purity

Perseverance

Next, plant three rows of 'Squash' -

Squash Gossip

Squash Criticism

Squash Indifference

Then plant five rows of 'Lettuce' -

Let us be Faithful to duty

Let us be Loyal and Unselfish

Let us be True to our obligations

Let us Love one another.

No garden is complete without 'Turnips' -

Turn up with a smile

Turn up with new ideas

Turn up with the determination to make everything count for something good and worthwhile.

This originally came from Family Circle,  
Shaftsbury and Gillingham Methodist Church

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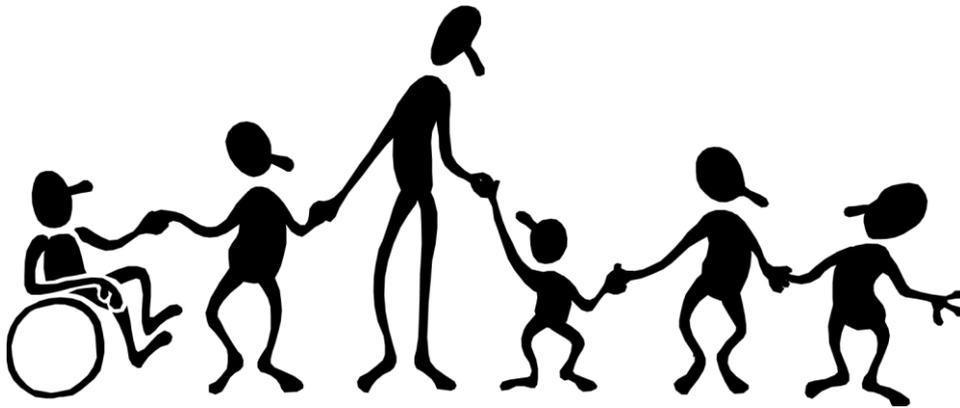
Kind Hearts are the Gardens;

Kind Thoughts are the Roots;

Kind Words are the Flowers;

Kind Deeds are the Fruits.

(Anon.)



## Join the Link

*Dear Friends,*

“The Sovereign LORD has taught me what to say,  
so that I can strengthen the weary.

Every morning he makes me eager  
to hear what he is going to teach me.”

Isaiah 50, v. 4 (GNB)

Thank you for reading this magazine. Most of you will be reading it online and I hope that those of you who do not have internet facilities will have been given a printed copy. If you know of anyone who needs a printed copy, why not ring them and ask if you can print it out for them? It may well be that someone has already performed this service for them, but, in any case, you can have a chat – and you will both benefit. Please look again at the verse above. God will help us to find the words, so phone someone. When someone phones you, listen carefully. What is God teaching you through them?

Stay safe.

God bless us all.

*Jackie*

***A message from the Revd Richard Andrew,  
Chair of the Darlington District***

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

I am writing to you in the light of the government's recent recommendations regarding how as a nation we might emerge from the lockdown and, in particular, how this might impact upon the reopening of church buildings for worship and community activities. The broad picture is of a gradual loosening of restrictions as the nation attempts to return to some kind of normality. At the same time, whilst the lockdown may be eased in the coming weeks, we will continue to face the possibility of a tightening of restrictions until either the virus is eradicated or a vaccine is developed. The movement to a new normality will be gradual and this will be true for church life as well as the rest of society.

The government has set out a three-stage process for emergence from the lockdown with provisional dates provided for each stage. At present we are somewhere between Stages 1 and 2 where most restrictions remain in place. The government envisages places of worship being able to reopen, subject to being able to meet strict Covid 19 conditions, in Stage 3 somewhere around July 4th. Whilst we rejoice that we will be able to access some of our buildings again for worship we also need to recognise that it may be several months before we are able to worship in the ways in which we did before the lockdown. Initially as we return to worship, we will have to observe strict social distance rules, we may have to wear masks, and we may not be able to do things like use service sheets or hymn books or sing because of the dangers of spreading the virus. There will be members of vulnerable groups who will be cautious about attending worship and indeed may be discouraged from doing so for some months. Churches will need to be cleaned appropriately after each use. The same restrictions will apply to community groups and church building users. July 4th will mark a first tentative step towards a new normal: it is not a starter gun to return to 'business as usual' at least not yet. Indeed, most commentators believe it will take between 2-5 years for

the nation to properly recover from the impact of the pandemic and the Church is not immune from this.

We are all acutely aware of the impact of the pandemic upon the lives of individuals and communities, of people grieving loved ones, and of uncertainties and anxieties about the future. We need to be prepared as churches for this as we emerge from the crisis. At the same time, the lockdown has proven a time of real creativity in church life and an opportunity to reassess what is important and indeed to rediscover aspects of our life together which we may have lost and which we need to build on. As we continue to travel through Easter, I am reminded of the resurrection story in John 21 where the disciples fish all night and catch nothing. As they meet the risen Christ, he encourages them to throw their nets out on the other side. As we emerge from the crisis, I wonder if we ought to take that story seriously rather than rushing back to the ways in which we have always done things. Perhaps God is calling us to put our nets out on the other side and to be courageous enough to inhabit a new normal. As we gradually move back into our buildings and communities let us take the opportunity to reflect seriously and prayerfully what we are about and how, in the power of the Spirit, we might best serve and witness to the risen Lord.

As we prepare for the future, I want to assure you that there is a lot of work going on in the background in the district. I have been meeting by video link with Superintendents on a weekly basis and I hope to share some of that reflection with others in the coming weeks as we build together for the future.

With best wishes,

**The Revd Richard Andrew** | Chair of the Darlington District

*A contribution from a member of our Chinese congregation*

### **Minister Noodle' Fundraising Bazaar**

'I was so impressed when I saw Chris and Sue tried their best to invite people walking by to come to the Elvet Christmas Tree Festival, as well as selling coffee and tea, just because they wanted to contribute to the windows repairing fee. At that moment, I decided the Chinese congregation should take actions in response to this as well,' said Rev Lawrence Law.

As a result, the fundraising bazaar was held on 8 Feb, 2020 (Sat), from 11:00am to 3:00pm. It was a great success. Different kinds of goods were donated by church members from Durham, Middlesbrough and Newcastle, such as electronic appliances, clothes, utensils, stationaries and cosmetic products. What made the bazaar being special was the Chinese-style fried noodles prepared by Rev Law and his wife, Miss Angeline. On that day, Rev Law insisted to make the noodles all by his own without resting for a second.

'The noodles are so fragrant, I'm sure it must be very delicious,' commented by a lady, after trying the noodles, she confirmed her comment with a satisfied smile on her face.

More than 30 visitors enjoyed the meal as well as their visit. A teenager was excited for buying a brand-new coffee machine, a father bought his son a book as a gift, a British lady decided to buy a pair of chopsticks for learning Chinese culture... Everybody was leaving in great joy for finding treasures that they need.

By the end of the bazaar, £94 was raised from the noodles, £164.5 was raised from the goods and £142.5 was collected as offerings, £401 *was* raised in this event in total. The proceeds would be donated to Elvet Methodist Church, for the repairing fee of the windows in the room on the second floor.

After the last visitor left, Rev Law could finally take off his apron and take a rest, with joy and satisfaction of serving all the visitors today humbly.

(Hester Yu)

### *News from a friend*

Long-time Durham resident and former member at Elvet before she moved to North Yorkshire to be nearer to family, Kathleen Hall, regularly reads The Link online and keeps up with Elvet news. She has sent thanks for Rev John's letters which, she says, have kept her interested for quite some time during these lock down times.

"It was good to read and keep in touch with all that is going on at Elvet." She and her family are keeping well and safe and she hopes that all friends in Durham are, too.

However, she has one sad piece of news. Doug Holland has died. He was 90 last October and has been suffering from dementia for some years. He and Anne were members at Elvet for many years until they moved nearer to family. In the last two years they have both been in care together. Kathleen sends her love and good wishes.

### *Collections*

Friends are asked not to forget the impact of lockdown on charity finances. If you can, set up a standing order to make a regular charity payment.

Don't forget your own your own church if you usually put money in the collection plate.

Finally, we should have had Christian Aid Week in May, but you won't have had an envelope through the door.

Go to the Christian Aid website and select "Christian Aid Week" for details of how to donate your usual amount.



***A response from a reader to an earlier article***

I was interested to read the article by Pauline Watson in the last link magazine on her visit to Newcastle University in combination with the Alzheimer's Society, and I was pleased to read that she considered the research work being done and the service being offered by the society was money well spent. My wife Jacqui and I had help and support from the society for my late father-in-law and we were grateful for it.

In regard to Newcastle University as well as the work Pauline mentioned there is a tremendous amount of Medical Research being done often working with other universities and organisations. I joined a public and patient involvement group a few years back and find it both interesting and rewarding. Now in today's medical research Public involvement is an essential requirement for researchers to get funding so being involved is worthwhile and the various groups are always looking for people to join them. There is no need for volunteers to have any medical knowledge just an interest. The meetings are usually held in Newcastle but at present with all the restrictions they are held online. For anyone interested in joining a group probably the best way at the moment is to look on the voice website <https://www.voice-global.org> There you will find information on various groups and other research projects to join. It is my belief that over the last hundred years it is God who has given us an unprecedented insight into medicine and has given us some fantastic doctors, surgeons, nurses, and scientists, but we can all play our small part in pushing the boundaries further. For anyone who joins I hope you find it as interesting as I do.

John Fuller

## **WEDDING**

Congratulations to the following couple

married at Elvet

14th March Christy ENEBELI and Derrick Andrew ROBSON

## **FUNERALS**

Our condolences to the families and friends of those whose  
funerals have taken place

17th March Marion SHEPHERD (North Road)

19th March Helen MAJOR (Elvet)

9th April Isabel BATEMAN (Elvet)

4th May Joyce BLACKMAN (Elvet)

and Kenneth ELTRINGHAM, father of Jacqui Fuller  
(Bowburn)

Donald MACKAY, a member of the URC, died on April 26th.  
Donald regularly attended the Elvet Sunday evening service.

### ***We have a living hope***

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In God's great mercy he has caused us to be born again into a living hope, because Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Now we hope for the blessings God has for his children. These blessings, which cannot be destroyed or be spoiled or lose their beauty, are kept in heaven for you. God's power protects you through your faith until salvation is shown to you at the end of time. This makes you very happy, even though now for a short time different kinds of troubles may make you sad.

*1 Peter 1, vv 3-6, NCV Anglicised Edition*

## **CRADLE ROLL BIRTHDAYS**

**June**      4th      Hallie ROBSON (Elvet)  
                 5th      Kohen FARRIER (Elvet)

**July**        17th     Aiden FLOOD (Elvet)  
                 23rd     Imogen GWILYM (Elvet)

**August**    5th      Luna WINGFIELD (Elvet)  
                 19th     Zara READ (Elvet)

## **JUNIOR CHURCH BIRTHDAYS**

**June**        10th     Asher MOJO (Elvet)

**July**         6th      Alastair PHILLIPS (Elvet)

**August**    3rd      Hannah CLARKE (Elvet)  
                 6th      Ellie RANSON (Elvet)

*Happy Birthday to you all*

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### ***A QUOTATION FROM A GOVERNMENT LEAFLET***

One of the most important things you have to offer right now is your time. Make contact with others, reach out, check in and show you care.

## HEAVEN a guide for travellers

by MARCELLE PRICE

*A website find contributed by a reader – THANK YOU – with the American spellings Anglicized.*

**ACCOMMODATION:** Arrangements for first-class accommodation have been made in advance.

*'In my Father's house are many mansions ... I go to prepare a place for you.'*

JOHN 14, v. 2

**DEPARTURE TIMES:** The exact date of departure has not been announced. Travellers are advised to be prepared to leave at short notice.

*'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.'* ACTS 1, v. 7

**TICKETS:** Your ticket is a written pledge that guarantees your journey. It should be claimed and its promises kept firmly in hand.

*'He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.'* JOHN 5, v. 24

**CUSTOMS:** Only one declaration is required while going through customs.

*'I declare unto you the gospel ... that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again on the third day.'*

1 CORINTHIANS 15, vv. 1, 3 & 4

**IMMIGRATION:** All passengers are classified as immigrants, since they are taking up permanent residence in a new country. The quota is unlimited.

*'They desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: ... for he hath prepared for them a city.'* HEBREWS 11, v. 16

**LUGGAGE:** No luggage whatsoever can be taken.

*'We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.'* 1 TIMOTHY 6, v. 7

**AIR PASSAGE:** Travellers going directly by air are advised to watch daily for indications of imminent departure.

*'We which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.'*

1 THESSALONIANS 4, v. 17

VACCINATION AND INOCULATION: Injections are not needed as diseases are unknown at the destination.

*'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.'*

REVELATION 21, v. 4

CURRENCY: Supplies of currency may be forwarded ahead to await the passenger's arrival. Deposits should be as large as possible.

*'Lay up for yourself treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal.'*

MATTHEW 6, v. 20

CLOTHING: A complete and appropriate new wardrobe is provided for each traveller.

*'He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.'* ISAIAH 61, v. 10

TIME CHANGES: Resetting of watches will not be necessary. Nor will the watches.

*'The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof ... there shall be no night there.'* REVELATION 21, vv. 23 & 25

RESERVATIONS: Booking is now open. Apply at once.

*'Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.'*

2 CORINTHIANS 6, v. 2

CORONATION CEREMONY: The highlight of the journey is the welcoming reception and coronation which await each new arrival.

*'There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.'* 2 TIMOTHY 4, v.8

### *The Cruel Coronavirus*

Although up high in the sky the birds are still singing  
Our churches are closed and there are no bells ringing.  
There's dew on the grass and skies are cloudy and blue  
But beware! A virus is there which has killed more than a few.  
Many thousands have died and disappeared from our view.  
We may well survive this most terrible fate  
If we pay heed to the warnings not to congregate.  
We must stay at home - we must not roam  
Although it's not easy to live all alone  
There's always e-mails, texts and a phone.  
What can we do to help in the fight to conquer this COVID - 19?  
We've been told one of the best things to do is to keep our hands clean.  
In the shops, hand wash and soap fly off the shelves  
While we wash, wash, wash to take care of ourselves.  
In our country we are blessed with the NHS  
It's our source of salvation in times of distress.  
The Staff put their own lives at risk on the front line  
That is why every Thursday - at eight is the time  
When we start to clap and we all combine  
To show our appreciation and make a great sound  
And there I'll end with my prayer that soon a vaccine may be found.

Janet Ball Copyright 20/04/20

## **28 Years an Itinerant**

by Rev. Paul Beetham

In Lockdown, last summer seems a world away, but it was only on the last day of July 2019 that Janet and I returned to Durham having been 'travelling the stations' for 28 years. We left Durham in August 1991 heading for East Anglia. My first appointment was to the Wisbech Circuit where in the land of Dorothy L Sayers 'Nine Tailors', I had pastoral charge of nine churches. My churches were spread over some 200 square miles across the Cambridgeshire and Norfolk Fens with members living in Lincolnshire. It was a land of huge skies, broad horizons and straight, parallel lines. The Manse in Terrington St. John was at sea level and one of my churches 16 feet below sea level. We looked for but never found Gedney Hill despite the road signs. I think we would have needed a theodolite. The scattered churches had between them some 240 members. The land was the most fertile in Europe and Harvest Festivals the biggest events of the year for both churches and villages. I used to take Harvest Festivals from September until the beginning of November and everybody had an auction of produce. When the biggest cauliflower you ever saw came up for sale the new Minister was asked to begin the bidding after which everyone refused to make any further bids. We took the huge vegetable home not really quite sure what to do with it. Soon after arriving, I was invited to visit the local Secondary School which covered much of the area of my churches. I was asked to be a Governor and by April to take the Chair. My District Chairman insisted that I should agree. Thus began an eventful 5 years with Marshland High School. It was a very good way of getting to know the families in all these villages and although it was not a church school it was always

clear that I was the Methodist Minister. With two very good head teachers and control of its own affairs the school progressed from being at the bottom of the Norfolk league table to being the highest achieving school in North Norfolk. The experience of building new classrooms proved very useful when it came to the new Methodist Church building at Parson Drove. A local artist designed a stained-glass window for the new building celebrating communion but the design had to be adjusted slightly as it featured a bottle of red French wine. This became a beautiful round carafe in the final version through which the setting sun shone as we celebrated. My last act in the Circuit was to purchase a new site for the new church of St. James Marshland. This was sold to us at cost price by Swann-Morton the Sheffield steel company who made the scalpels I used to use in my Biology research. They were called Swann-Morton because the founder Mr. Swann had been given a home in the Fens by a Methodist family called Morton who were still very much part of the local church. The land had been bought by the company to support the Fenland people during the 1930s slump. The Managing Director told me that they would be delighted to help the Methodist Church. When I preached at the opening of the new building some five years later, I was able to remind them of the seed that had been sown and the fruit that had grown so many years later. Five years after leaving Durham I received a phone call late at night telling me that a committee in London had decided that I should be Chaplain to the dockers at Felixstowe. A visit to Suffolk during the next week also introduced us to the 4 churches that came with the Docks. We agreed and the following August moved into the Felixstowe manse which had a balcony on the first floor from which we could address the nuns

in the Convent over the road. The Port of Felixstowe is the largest in Britain and only exceeded by Rotterdam in Europe. I was given a flashing light for my car and a white hard hat together with a little yellow jacket which I rapidly exchanged in stores for a proper dockers jacket. There were 10,000 people on the site and I wondered where to begin. The Managing Director had given me complete access but the key people were the three medical Sisters who looked after the dockers. I realised that if I had their confidence it would give me access to the dockers. Each Thursday I used to visit them and then walked the quayside. After a couple of weeks, they told me about John (not his real name) a Supervisor who had been badly injured unloading a ship. I went to visit him in Colchester hospital. He was worried that he had not filled in an accident form and that he might lose his job and so after prayers and reassurance I went back to the dock, made sure everything was in order and went back to tell him. Thus began 8 years of Chaplaincy with weddings, baptisms and funerals. One of the highlights was being given a dockers sixpence, a silver medal given by the union to dockers after 25 years' service. I was told my name was on the list, meaning that I had been accepted as a member of the Dockers community. One of the challenges of such Chaplaincy was to link it to the local churches whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality so that the church members felt connected with the work on the Docks.

In 2004 another priority appointment led us to Widnes where I was the Superintendent Minister. Widnes is on the Mersey, some 10 miles east of Liverpool and 20 west of Manchester. ICI was founded in the town and there were still many scientists in the congregations who related to my scientific background. Liverpool has had a long history of ecumenism, so

that as the Methodist Superintendent I and Anglican Bishops shared all the local Confirmations. We also hosted the presiding Methodist Bishop of Nigeria who had been invited for consultation by the Liverpool Anglican Diocese. Some of our congregation learnt however that if you ask him to say grace at meal times it could last for 40 minutes and the food had to be reheated. In Widnes I looked after three local ecumenical projects amongst five churches and was the United Reformed Minister as well as the Methodist Superintendent. In addition to looking after five churches I also Chaired a local Methodist project with some 60 staff and volunteers. Here we pioneered new schemes in working with local children and families including after school clubs and schemes to help families who had difficulty getting their children to school on time. Many of these schemes were taken on by local authorities and became the norm.

I was invited in 2006 to become Superintendent of the Birmingham (West) & Oldbury Circuit and so returned the following year to be Minister of Quinton Methodist Church where I had become a member of the Methodist Church in 1970. The Circuit Stewards had no idea of my links to the church until I asked where the pool table was that I had played on as a teenager, and the former youth leader now an eminent retired headmaster recognised me after 35 years. The Circuit runs west from the centre of Birmingham along the Hagley Road with 5 Birmingham churches and 9 in the Black Country. The communities are varied and multi-cultural as was the Circuit Staff. We enjoyed Caribbean evenings, Black Country evenings (with bostin victuals) and Scottish/Caribbean Burns Nights. We ran community projects which served a range of communities in different ways. Beginagen gave help, advice and representation

dealing with finance, housing, immigration and many other issues. Two projects became standalone charities providing child care and community care in Birmingham and Smethwick. The annual Boys and Girls Brigade camp found me in all sorts of places including at one point travelling rather fast down a zip-wire slung between trees in Devon. We facilitated a drop-in centre for the homeless at City Road Methodist Church and I conducted all sorts of services for different communities including an annual Ghanaian carol festival which lasted 4 hours followed by supper in the presence of the Ghanaian ambassador. I even ended up on 'Good Morning Britain' on ITV as City Road Methodist Church found itself to be a Pokémon hotspot. Over the years I served on a variety of national working parties and committees being involved in reports on safeguarding, discipline, sabbaticals, domestic violence and climate change. Four years on Faith & Order included reading the whole of 'Singing the Faith' in two weeks and discussing it in two days. In 2001 I was asked to be Chaplain to the Methodist Conference at Ipswich which gave me a very different perspective to the one I had as a member of the Conference in other years. I have been a trustee of both The Christ & The Cosmos Initiative and The Science & Religion Forum, editing books and contributing papers to both. Coming full circle Rev Professor David Wilkinson asked me to be a member of a group of senior clergy which investigates Science & Technology. In 2016 my last sabbatical I became a visiting fellow of St. John's College, Durham.

There is much more that could be written and some that should not be written about the last 28 years but this is a precis of some of the places and events between leaving Belmont in 1991 and returning in 2019. Last June I asked the Methodist

Conference for permission to sit down having served God as one of Mr. Wesley's travelling preachers for 28 years. They agreed and here we are.

*The information given below does not apply during lockdown. We hope to return to worship and our other community activities as soon as it is safe to do so.*

*Details of church activities during lockdown can be found on pages 4 and 5.*

### **THE WEEK IN BOWBURN**

|            |                 |                                                           |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Sundays    | <b>10.30 am</b> | <b>Morning Worship</b>                                    |
| Wednesdays | 2 - 3 pm        | Prayer & Fellowship Meeting<br>last Weds of month.        |
| Thursdays  | 9.00 am         | * "Drop-in"                                               |
|            | 5.30 pm         | * Brownies<br>(Contact: Karen Heron 07921377321)          |
|            | 7.15 pm         | * Guides<br>(Contact Rosalind [Ros] Waites 0191 377 9995) |

**\* term-time only**

[http://www.durhamdeernessmethodist.org.uk/wordpress/?page\\_id=10](http://www.durhamdeernessmethodist.org.uk/wordpress/?page_id=10)

### **THE WEEK AT ELVET**

|       |                                                                         |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sun   | <b>8.30 a.m. Second Sunday, Holy Communion</b>                          |
|       | <b>10.45 a.m. Morning Service &amp; Junior Church, including Crèche</b> |
|       | <b>2.00 p.m. Worship in Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese)</b>            |
|       | <b>6.00 p.m. Evening Worship</b>                                        |
|       | 7.00 p.m. MethSoc (term-time)                                           |
| Mon   | 2.00 p.m. Prayer Meeting (2nd & 4th Monday)                             |
|       | 6.00 p.m. Cubs (Open Group) [Boys and Girls 8-10½ yrs.]                 |
|       | 7.30 p.m. Explorers (Open Group) [Mixed 14½-18 yrs.]                    |
|       | 7.45 p.m. Elvet Homegroup (alternate weeks)                             |
|       | 7.45 p.m. Shincliffe House Group (alternate weeks)                      |
|       | <i>Rainbows, Brownies and Guides contact number 372 1786</i>            |
| Tue   | 10.15 a.m. Ecumenical House Group (alternate Tuesdays)                  |
|       | 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   | 12 noon Lunch Stop ALL welcome<br>(roughly equates with term-time)      |
| Thurs | 10.00 a.m. Arts & Crafts Workshop                                       |
|       | 7.30 p.m. Thursday Club for All (alternate weeks)                       |

<http://www.elvet-church.org.uk/>

### THE WEEK AT FRAMWELLGATE MOOR

Sundays **10.30 am** **Morning Worship**  
Tuesdays 10.00 am Prayer Meeting  
Thursdays 10 - 11am Dance Fusion

Framwellgate's Church Hall is rented out during the week for exercise classes. Why not visit their website for details? - especially if you live in the area.

[http://www.durhamdeernessmethodist.org.uk/wordpress/?page\\_id=236](http://www.durhamdeernessmethodist.org.uk/wordpress/?page_id=236)

### THE WEEK AT NORTH ROAD

Sun **10.30 am** **Morning Worship**  
**1.00 pm** **Durham Korean Church**

Mon 1.30 --3.30 am Blind Life in Durham social group

Tues 10.00 am - 1.30 Craftworks with Mannas light lunch  
*Craft, friendship and support* (fortnightly)  
10. am - noon Visually impaired Coffee Morning (monthly)  
1.30 - 2.30 pm Smart Support group  
3.00 - 4.00 pm Smart Support Group

Wed 10 - 12 noon Dementia Café (monthly)

Thurs 9.30-11.30 am Messy Mornings (term-time only)  
10 - 1.00 pm Birmingham Institute for the Deaf  
2.00 - 4 pm Birmingham Institute for the Deaf  
1.00 - 3 pm Hartlepool Mind Support Group Drop-In (weekly)

Fri 10 - 4.00 pm Birmingham Institute for the Deaf

Sat 9 - 10.15 am Men's Breakfast (third Saturday)  
10 am - 1 pm Coffee Morning (second Saturday)  
11.30 - 1.30 pm Durham City of Sanctuary 'Drop In' for Refugees.

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

**ELVET, NORTH ROAD, FRAMWELLGATE MOOR and  
BOWBURN METHODIST CHURCHES**

**Ministers**

Rev John Squares

Tel: 07854 451921

Rev Andy Longe

Tel: 07539 453223

Deacon Ruth Lackenby

Tel: 386 3800

**DON'T FORGET**

Copy for the **September - November** magazine  
should reach Jackie Fielding by

**August 2nd**

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

by phone on 01388 835201

or by e-mail at [fielding@durhamcity.org.uk](mailto:fielding@durhamcity.org.uk)

**Alternatively**, those at **Shincliffe** and **Bowburn** can contact  
Liz Atkinson on 01388 227316.

Those at **North Road** can contact Martin Wright

Those at **Framwellgate Moor** can contact Eileen Maughan.  
[eileenmaughan@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:eileenmaughan@yahoo.co.uk)