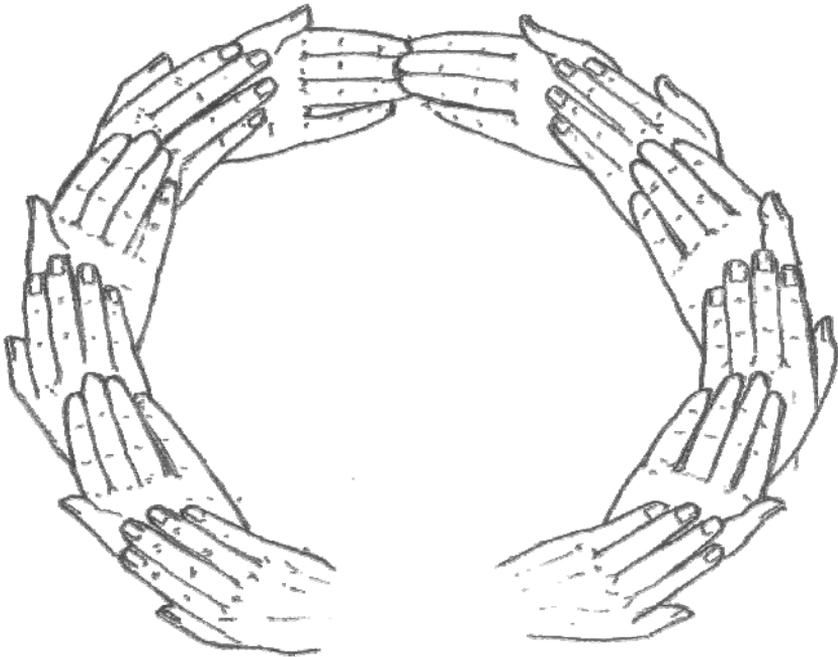


The Link

MAGAZINE

for Bowburn, Framwellgate Moor,
North Road and Elvet Methodists



June-July-August '15

A letter from our Minister

Dear Friends,

As I settle to write this letter, I am conscious of the news about the devastating earthquake in Nepal and the subsequent loss and disruption of thousands of lives. This comes following news over the past weeks of the humanitarian crisis evolving around the Mediterranean where many are losing their lives at sea whilst fleeing their homes in North Africa.

These are only two of the many items of news that we see daily informing us of the difficulties facing the world because of the mass displacement of huge populations of people due to war, famine or disaster. At times this can all seem too hard to comprehend, too heart-breaking to think of.

I have had people ask the question, 'How can we respond to this?' not meaning just monetary response, but how they might deal with their feelings of helplessness, only being able to watch these things unfold from a great distance.

Yes, it is right and good that we can donate our money to relief funds so that those with the expertise can respond adequately, that people can be given immediate care and receive food and clean water as needed. However, as Christian communities, how else do we respond?

The two pieces of news that I have high-lighted at first seem quite different, in that one is what we would call a 'natural' disaster and the other the consequence of human failings and leadership, but disasters are always compounded by the ability or otherwise of a country's infrastructure to withstand such events. This means in practice that those countries that have the money to build houses, offices, transport and communication links that are better able to withstand the forces of earthquake, flood or high winds suffer far fewer deaths and casualties than poor countries that don't have these resources.

Where natural resources such as water and food are in short supply and where there is discriminatory and corrupt government, where people live in fear of their own and their families lives, of course they will try to find somewhere better to be, to risk all for a better chance in life.

In a divided world of rich and poor, of those that have much and those who have little, the message that Jesus reinforced, that we 'Love our neighbour as ourselves' is more urgent than ever.

So how do we love?

As mentioned before, we can give; but more than this, we can choose to use our power as consumers by buying fairly traded produce, using resources frugally, backing organisations that try to make a difference to how governments and large industries create their policies (and profits); There are several good online petition groups that you can sign up to if you have the facilities.

As the May elections creep up on us we can also use our vote with responsibility, asking not only 'How will these policies affect me?' but 'How will they affect everyone?' Questioning potential MP's not only on domestic policy, but foreign policy as well.

Having just celebrated Easter perhaps we might be more aware of Christ suffering within the situations we have mentioned, walking alongside those for whom the world is a harsh and unloving place, calling us to have understanding and compassion, to use our freedom to restore the lives of others. Just as he came to restore the life of the world.

'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,
I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing,
I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.....
Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me'.

Matthew 25:35-36,40

Annette



WORSHIP IN JUNE

Bowburn

- 7th 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Andy Longe
- 14th 10.30 a.m. Readers' Service
- 21st 10.30 a.m. Rev Andy Longe
- 28th **Conference Sunday**
10.30 a.m. Prof Mark Wilson

Elvet

- 7th 10.45 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Shaun Swithenbank
6.00 p.m. Mr Eric Watchman
- 14th 8.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Shaun Swithenbank
10.45 a.m. Mrs Margaret Wadge
6.00 p.m. Readers' Service
- 21st **Junior Church Anniversary**
10.45 a.m. Mrs Anne Offler
6.00 p.m. Holy Communion - Rev Shaun Swithenbank
- 28th **Conference Sunday**
10.45 a.m. Readers' Service
(Transmission of Conference Sunday Worship from Southport -
see pages 18 and 19)
6.00 p.m. Mr Sean Conroy

WORSHIP IN JUNE

Framwellgate Moor

7th 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Robert Fisher

14th 10.30 a.m. Mrs Elaine Goy

21st 10.30 a.m. Readers' Service

28th **Conference Sunday**

10.30 a.m. Rev Shaun Swithenbank

(Transmission of Conference Sunday Worship from Southport at Elvet - see pages 18 and 19)

North Road

7th 10.30 a.m. Readers' Service

14th 10.30 a.m. Mr Sean Conroy

21st **10.45 a.m. at Elvet**

28th **Conference Sunday**

10.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Robert Fisher

*For worship in July and August,
please consult the plan -
or your own church notices.*



RISING STARS AT NORTH ROAD

by Edgar Senior

The third week in March was a good time for astronomers: the day after the solar eclipse - which many people were able to watch directly because of helpful cloud cover - several new stars were to be seen at North Road.

Our annual Rising Stars concert attracted a good audience and was as enjoyable as ever. Marion's pupils presented a programme of piano music and songs across a range of styles, in the main rising to the challenge of playing on a grand piano and to a large audience.

The concert set off, literally, with a bang - or rather several bangs. Elizabeth played "Five Aunts Boogie", a duet with Marion playing the lower part and also a rhythmic drum part. This was facilitated by Ellie. She was later to play music by Chopin and Schubert with great poise and authority, but in the opening number she knelt down behind the two players and presented the drum to Marion when required - a fine example of cross-generation co-operation.

The programme continued with a dozen other performers, some both playing and singing, too many to detail here, but perhaps I should mention Julia, the youngest, who charmed us with "Chattanooga Choo Choo"; and Adam, one of the oldest, who gave us a commanding performance of his own variations on the old German hymn tune which we sing to the words "From all that dwell below the skies". (The hymn even finishes with an astronomical reference - look it up! [StF 75])

Altogether a lovely hour of music making.

~~~~~

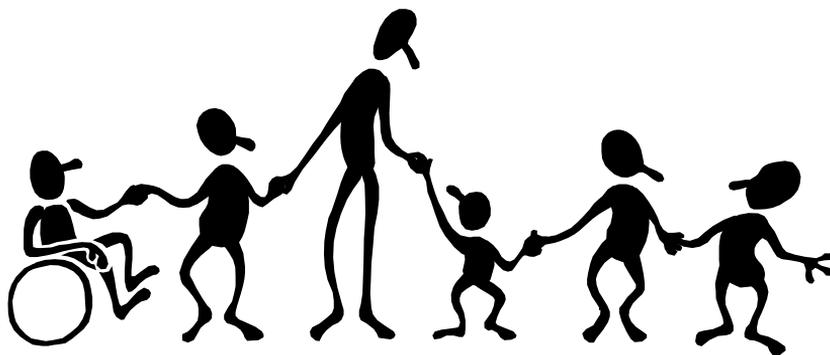
### **North Road's next concert:**

June 6th at 2.30p.m.

Songs of World War One

George Hetherington, piano,  
with singers Eileen Glenton and Eddie Gratton

*(See also page 23)*



## Join the Link

*Dear Friends,*

Some of you may know that I am learning to play bridge. It is complicated and challenging and lots of fun. I've met some lovely new people and really enjoy myself.

The rules of the game are difficult to learn and I make a lot of mistakes, especially in my bidding. I get the rules muddled up or I miscalculate my hand and I make the wrong bid. Bridge is played as a partnership game and my wrong bid leads my partner into other wrong bids (all my fault) and makes it difficult to win, because we end up in the wrong contract.

I was playing one afternoon and four times I failed to say "One no trump" when I should have. I commended my partner's patience with me; "People don't usually think of me as patient," my partner said, and, for the rest of the afternoon, she was even more patient with me than she had been before.

Just a thought. Enjoy reading this issue.

*Jackie*



**ANNOUNCING  
A MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY,  
SATURDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 3PM,  
NORTH ROAD METHODIST CHURCH**

Join us for afternoon tea, celebrating 150 years since the publication of "Alice in Wonderland" and learn about author Lewis Carroll's connections with North East England. Tickets £5 from Joan Portrey Tel.0191 3869943 or email [joan@portrey.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:joan@portrey.fsnet.co.uk). Proceeds to the Church Project.

**Tracing the Carroll Connection along the River Tees.  
"Curiouser and Curiouser" we find a real café church.**

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (Lewis Carroll's real name) made many visits to relatives at Sunderland and Whitburn, and he spent part of his childhood from the age of 11, at Croft on Tees, where his father became rector in 1843. The Rectory remained the family home for the next 25 years. To find out more about the North Eastern locations which may have inspired characters in the "Alice" stories, come along to the tea party on 4th July; an easy date to remember, but nothing to do with stars and stripes!

It was actually on 4th July 1862 that Dodgson, then an Oxford Don, took the Dean of Christ Church's three little daughters, including Alice, on a boating picnic on the Thames. To amuse the children, he made up a story of a little girl falling down a rabbit hole into the curious world of Wonderland. The story was later written down and eventually published as "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" in 1865.



## Rethink Sanctions

New data from Freedom of Information Requests to the Department of Work and Pensions shows that people who receive the sickness and disability benefit Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) because of a long-term mental health problem are more likely to have their benefits stopped by sanctions than those suffering from other conditions. These people are currently being sanctioned at a rate of more than 100 per day.

“Sanctioning someone with a mental health problem for being late for a meeting is like sanctioning someone with a broken leg for limping. The fact that this system punishes people for the symptoms of their illness is a clear and worrying sign that it is fundamentally flawed,” said Paul Morrison from the Joint Public Issues Team of the Methodist Church. “Churches have increasingly seen people in desperate need because they have been sanctioned. The suffering and injustice we have seen caused by the sanctions system deserves serious scrutiny.”

Paul also appeared on BBC Radio 4's File on 4 to talk about these findings and how sanctions are too often penalising the vulnerable.

.....

### A thought from a Bible verse

#### 1 Timothy 1: 16

.. in me ... Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.

**FRAMWELLGATE MOOR METHODIST CHAPEL  
146th ANNIVERSARY (1869-2015)**

**Preacher: Mr T. Sterling**

**Duets: Mr and Mrs Woods**

We celebrated our 146<sup>th</sup> Chapel Anniversary on a lovely Spring day. The Church was warm and welcoming due to the many Spring flowers which had been arranged and the extra installation from the new windows, which we have been able to fit within the last few months.

We have invited one of our regular visitors to write a short piece about her experience -

"A number of Carrville Ladies were very pleased to be able to attend Framwellgate Church on 21<sup>st</sup> February to share in celebrating their Chapel Anniversary service.

The very warm welcome at the door - and then seeing the hard work that had been carried out since our last visit - the new windows and new carpet on the stage - made you realise the tremendous faith of the members of the Church.

The guest preacher, Mr Tom Sterling from Lumley, gave a very moving talk - interspersed with the singing of rousing hymns and listening to two lovely duets - led to a very emotional testimony by Amy Sterling, wife of Andrew (Framwellgate Moor's recent lay worker) on the miracle birth of their son Isaac who we were all pleased to see as good as gold in his carrycot.

The afternoon ended perfectly when we chatted with old friends whilst enjoying an excellent tea, even ending with 'Doggy Bags' to take home.

How thankful we felt that our Churches are open for us to attend these Anniversary services when we remember the past and pray for the future."

**DOROTHY METHERELL  
CARRVILLE**

BAPTISMS

We have welcomed into the family of the Church

26 April April Ethel Andrea DOWSON  
and Sienna Rae GIBSON (Elvet)

FUNERALS

Our condolences to the families and friends of those whose funerals  
have been held in our churches.

25 February Margaret TILLEY (Elvet)

14 April Anne ALLEN (Elvet)



On April 26th, 2015  
we lit a candle on the Elvet War Memorial.

The candle was lit in memory of Elvet member  
Private 2622 Thomas William Jarvis of the Durham Light Infantry  
who lost his life exactly 100 years earlier  
on April 26th, 1915, at the Second Battle of Ypres.

*Lest we forget.*

**Your editor was charged by Elvet's Senior Steward to write Elvet's piece for the next Circuit plan (July-Sept).**

**Her article is reproduced below.**

On March 8th, we at Elvet hosted a service attended by visitors from all over the circuit as well as our own congregation. The President of Conference, Rev Ken Howcroft, was visiting to share in our morning worship and preach. He challenged us to be worthy of the sacrifice which Jesus made for us, and for all, in His willing giving of himself. Mr Howcroft stayed on for a shared lunch, and he and others joined our Chinese congregation for their usual Sunday afternoon worship.

Another shared event saw us welcome choir members from North Road Methodist and St Oswald's Anglican churches, who joined our own choir to sing Stainer's "Crucifixion" on Passion Sunday (March 22nd). The quality of the music and the singing, conveying their spiritual message, was very high.

In addition to special events such as these, we continue our life of worship, work and witness week by week. The Chinese congregation is well established and continues to grow; Methsoc meets in our Upper Room on Sundays in term-time; Thursday Club and Lunch Stop welcome everyone, providing opportunities for congregation members to work and/or have fun with non-congregation members; Mondays and Tuesdays see enthusiastic members of the uniformed organisations enjoy their activities.

Signs of growth: our Monday evening housegroup has become so big that it has split into two and people who did not go to the original group have joined in at the new venue; in addition, four more congregation members have completed the training and become worship leaders.

*(Continued on page 14)*



## CRADLE ROLL BIRTHDAYS

**June** 9th Siena Rae Gibson (Elvet)  
**August** 27th Lois Anderson (Elvet)

## JUNIOR CHURCH, BIRTHDAYS

**July** 4th Joshua Bissell (Elvet)  
 5th Alex Kelly (Elvet)  
 6th Alastair Phillips (Elvet)  
**August** 31st Nathan Russell Kelly (Elvet)

*Happy Birthday*

*(Continued from page 13)*

We are very lucky at Elvet to have a small army of dedicated behind-the-scenes workers - our gardens are beautifully kept by one team, another does small repairs and odd jobs round the building, our crèche is staffed Sunday by Sunday, catering is done for events large and small, and sound and visuals have another team of (in my view) very clever workers. Finally, our website, so important in the modern age, is constantly updated and can be found here: <http://www.elvet-church.org.uk/>.

Elvet opens for Foodbank between 1.30 and 3pm on Tuesdays.

September will see the launch of our next project. We will be raising money for Grace Haven Orphanage in Myanmar (Burma), a Christian charity run by Rev. Daw Ma Lay and her husband, a retired Detective Inspector from Durham Constabulary.

## **ADVANCED NOTICE OF FUNDRAISER FOR ELVET FLOWER FUND**

Our church was yet again beautifully decorated for Easter - thanks to Rosemary, Jeanette and the Flower Team. However flowers, containers and equipment and tools are expensive and there is a shortage of spare cash in the flower fund. To try to boost funds, Sue and Paul Harrison are holding a garden open day at their home in early June (date yet to be confirmed).



Your visit can be at your leisure but can also include an optional mystery trail around the grounds; solving clues as you go (no horticultural knowledge is required). There will also be a plant stall and of course refreshments (morning visitors will be offered a light lunch, p.m. visitors will be served afternoon tea.).

The gardens will be open come rain or shine, but there will be seating for eating if weather is inclement!

If anyone would like to donate plants/pots/ or assistance on the day, please contact the Harrisons on 0191 3861550 and remember to look out for posters, or updated details on the church calendar, if you want tickets.

## Trivial Pursuits?

### **The visit by the President of Conference Ken Howcroft**

The third week in Lent, March 8th, saw Elvet Methodist church host a united service for the circuit. It was wonderful to welcome so many members from other churches on a fresh spring morning. Elvet was doubly graced as the President of Conference, Rev. Ken Howcroft, was visiting the church to share in the morning worship and give the sermon.

Shaun welcomed Rev. Howcroft as 'Our man in Rome' as he had previously been looking after the English language Methodist Church in that city as well as being the Methodist representative to the Vatican, amongst other roles. Rev. Howcroft's sermon focused on the Gospel reading from John 2 where Jesus goes to the temple and overturns the moneychangers' tables; and Exodus 20 where God gives the ten commandments to Moses. The congregation were also challenged to consider whether the giving up of chocolate for Lent might be regarded as trivialising the sacrifice Jesus made for us.

Following the service we had a delicious shared lunch, beautifully presented, in the church hall. After lunch Rev. Howcroft was invited to relate some of his experiences in his role as President. He told us he had had a few humbling episodes from visiting different parts of the country and seeing different initiatives that were taking place in order to share the Good News. A particularly moving story came from Rotherham. It took place around the time the sensitive abuse reports broke. The council offices were opposite the Methodist church and the church wanted to pray for the situation. The church sensitively realised that for some, coming into church to ask for prayer would be very difficult and daunting. Instead the

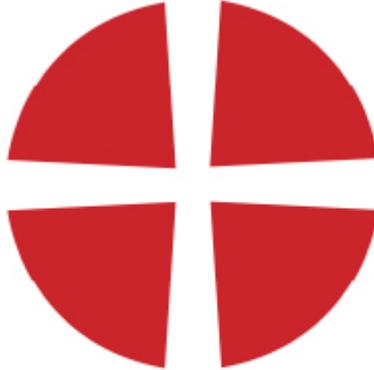
church invited members of the council and public to tie ribbons on the church railings as a sign that prayer would be appreciated in connection to the revelations that were occurring. Ribbons did appear and the church was able to hold the council and others, including victims, in prayer. Another positive story came from Hull. A church with a very small membership had been able to continue because a larger church had agreed to manage various administrative roles of the smaller church. With this burden being lifted the smaller church could focus on other aspects and had seen its membership increasing.

The President commented that he felt very supported by the prayers of those who followed his travels electronically wherever he went in the country. A presidential candle is given to the various districts and churches that he visits. This is to be lit to remind members that we are prayed for and to prompt us to pray about the work he is doing. With his hectic schedule, Rev. Howcroft forgot to bring Elvet's candle! Well, we are all only human aren't we? However, he made a point of getting the candle to Shaun, personally, at the earliest opportunity and it now sits on a table near the sanctuary where it is lit each week.

The busy day continued with the President of Conference and those of us left, joining the Chinese Church for their afternoon service. He was presented with a gift which he was delighted to accept. Rev. Howcroft also took part in the Chinese Church service.

It was a great honour to welcome Rev. Howcroft to our Church and we hope he will be able to visit us again.

by Sue Shearsmith



The Methodist Church of Great Britain  
<http://www.methodist.org.uk/>

## **The Methodist Conference 2015 June 25th - July 2nd in Southport**

The Conference is the governing body of the Methodist Church under God. It has responsibility for the government, discipline, management and administration of the life of the Church. Members of the Conference hold a trustee responsibility. The Conference is also a place for worship, thanksgiving, Ordination and celebration. The business of the Conference is done by seeking the will of God through conferring together.

Visit: <http://www.methodistconference.org.uk/about>

### **Coming to the Conference**

As well as its 306 representatives and associate members, the Methodist Conference welcomes interested visitors and anyone may attend the open conference sessions, visit the exhibition or attend fringe events. There are very few closed sessions and these are clearly indicated in the agenda.

Visitors do not need a ticket except for the Opening of the Conference on the afternoon of Saturday 27 June and the Conference Sunday Worship on Sunday 28 June. You will also need a ticket if you wish to attend one of the Ordination services.

## **Ordinations**

The ordination of new presbyteral and diaconal ministers has become a highlight of the Conference week. Having been received into full Connexion at the service of Sunday Worship in the morning, presbyters, deacons, family and friends travel to local places of worship to be ordained.

Ordination Services will take place this year on Sunday 28 June. Tickets are free, but applicants are limited to four tickets to any one Conference service.

Online ticket orders can be placed after 9am on Monday 30 March and a link to our bookings page will be available on the website, [www.methodistconference.org.uk/about](http://www.methodistconference.org.uk/about). If you do not have access to the internet, it will be possible to place an order by telephone. Details of how to do this will be published on the same website.

Elvet Methodist Church hopes to broadcast Conference Sunday Worship during the morning service on June 28th and Framwellgate Moor Methodist Church hopes to join them.

Deacon Annette Sharp will be ordained at Blackburn Cathedral on the evening of June 28th at 6.30pm. Tickets can be obtained from Penny Bissell.

## ELVET COMMUNION COLLECTIONS



### **Amounts raised in recent collections:**

December '14 for St Cuthbert's Hospice £84

January '15 for St Cuthbert's Hospice £48

February '15 for Global Care (NE) £148

In the next few months we are collecting for:

### **June - Great North Air Ambulance**

The Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAS) operates three helicopters, 365 days a year, across the North-East, North Yorkshire and Cumbria. GNAAS crews respond to around 1,000 call outs each year and on board our aircraft are specialist trauma doctors and paramedics, who bring accident and emergency expertise to the scene.

Whether it's in a city centre or a remote mountain, our medics respond to wherever they are needed in the shortest space of time. The helicopters are never more than a 15-minute flight from the nearest hospital.

### **July - 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.

### **August - Benevolence Fund**

An emergency hardship fund for immediate distribution to needy cases within the Church and its community.  
Distributed at the discretion of the Minister.

**"More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of"**

Tennyson



I have updated the information about **Elvet's Prayer Group** on "The Week at ..." pages; viz:

Mon 2.00 p.m. **Prayer Meeting** (1st & 3rd Mon)

I commend this group to readers;  
you can go along or you can ask for prayers to be said.

Please remember the validity of the quotation from Tennyson above.

**Framwellgate Moor** also has a prayer group and I was able to attend one Tuesday recently.

Tuesdays 10.00 am **Prayer Meeting**

I was very impressed by this group of faithful Christians.

Do you know why?

Because their prayers were full of thankfulness and praise.

So here is another group you can join or make prayer requests to.

On another topic, I have also updated the information about **Elvet's Women's Fellowship**; viz:

Wed 2.00 p.m. Women's Fellowship (1st Wed)

The Fellowship Group meets immediately after Lunch Stop so there is the opportunity for a very full and enjoyable afternoon.

**An Average Week in a busy city centre church  
North Road - one week in April**

*(For details of what is happening at any particular time, please visit*

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

North Road Methodist Church is situated next to the bus station, making it an ideal venue for a whole range of activities.

**WEEK BEGINNING 12th April 2015**

|                    |                      |             |
|--------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Sunday, 12th April |                      |             |
| 10:30am – 12 noon  | Morning Worship      | Church/Hall |
| 2:00pm – 6:00pm    | Durham Korean Church | Church/Hall |

|                    |                                        |         |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------|---------|
| Monday, 13th April |                                        |         |
| 10:00 – 10:45am    | Music Bugs                             | Hall    |
| 1:00pm – 3:30pm    | Food Bank                              | Cottage |
| 1:30pm – 3:30pm    | Blind Life in Durham<br>(Social Group) | Hall    |
| 2:00pm – 4:00pm    | Meeting                                | Cottage |
| 7:30pm – 9:30pm    | Durham Singers                         | Church  |
| 7:45pm – 9:15pm    | Crossgate Community<br>Partnership     | Hall    |

|                     |                                                |              |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Tuesday, 14th April |                                                |              |
| 9:00am – 10:00am    | Tesco Order                                    | Hall/Kitchen |
| 10:00am – 2:00pm    | Craftworks                                     | Hall/Kitchen |
| 10:30am – 12 noon   | Yoga (1/5)                                     | Church       |
| 6:00pm – 8:00pm     | Chinese Church                                 | Vestry       |
| 7:00pm – 9:30pm     | Encounter                                      | Church       |
| 7:30pm              | Choir Practice                                 | Hall         |
| 7:30pm – 9:30pm     | Local Preachers/Worship<br>Leaders Bible Study | Cottage      |

|                       |               |         |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------|
| Wednesday, 15th April |               |         |
| 1:00pm – 3:30pm       | Food Bank     | Cottage |
| 7:30pm – 9:30pm       | Dance Class   | Hall    |
| 7:30pm – 9:30pm       | Scratch Choir | Church  |

|                      |                                        |        |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------|--------|
| Thursday, 16th April |                                        |        |
| 8:00am – 12 noon     | Messy Morning                          | Hall   |
| 10:00am – 11:30am    | Social Club                            | Church |
| 6:00pm – 8:00pm      | New College<br>Sugarcraft Course (1/8) | Church |
| 7:15pm – 8:45pm      | Yoga                                   | Hall   |

|                    |           |              |
|--------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Friday, 17th April |           |              |
| 8:00am – 4:00pm    | Mannas    | Hall/Kitchen |
| 1:00pm – 3:30pm    | Food Bank | Cottage      |
| 7:00pm – 9:00pm    | Meeting   | Hall         |

|                      |                 |              |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Saturday, 18th April |                 |              |
| 8:30am – 9:45am      | Men's Breakfast | Hall/Kitchen |

***A North Road date for your diaries***

**Cuthbert's Folk**

If you want to know what happened to the Lindisfarne community after the death of Cuthbert and why his shrine ended up in Durham, come along to our concert **at North Road, Saturday June 27th, 2.30 pm.**

A new musical play by Rose Reeve followed by instrumentals, Northumbrian folk songs with Marian Aitchison and afternoon tea.

Donations to the church project.

**Taking Part in Stainer's 'Crucifixion'**  
**an article by Rose Reeve**

'All for Jesus.....all for Jesus  
 This our song shall ever be  
 For we have no hope, no Saviour  
 If we have no hope in Thee.'  
*(final hymn, Stainer's Crucifixion.)*

I must admit to mixed feelings about taking part in the recent performance of 'The Crucifixion' at Elvet on Passion Sunday. As I didn't know the work, I anticipated cloying Victorian sentimentality and less than brilliant music, but I was told that everyone should have the experience of singing it once in their life time, so I went along to swell the alto line.

When rehearsals started with our young conductor, David Harris, I was really impressed. David obviously knew and loved the work and found ways of making it come alive. The mood of 'The Crucifixion' alternates between the regal pomp of 'Fling wide the gates' and the pathos of 'Is it nothing to you?' John Stainer wrote his famous work in 1887, performable by any parish church choir and organist, with tenor and bass soloists rising from the ranks. (Choirs must have been top-notch in those days!) And the work obviously doesn't have the complexities nor the orchestral forces of, say, the St John Passion (*JS Bach*). Twenty-five years previously, the views of Charles Darwin and Thomas Huxley would have been causing disquiet in some church circles. John Stainer's work could be seen as a confident affirmation of the truth of the Christian faith.

I ended up being the only singer from North Road, but I found everyone very friendly. (Thanks to the two ladies who gave me lifts when I had decided to tramp all the way from home near Durham Johnston.) One student I chatted to in the interval said he'd just been helping throw together 'Sweeney Todd' in twelve days, going to bed at 3 am and getting up at 11. (How familiar that sounded.) Later on, at a social function at the University, a total stranger I'd been getting to know mentioned he'd recently been invited to Elvet to swell the tenor line. 'Stainer's Crucifixion, by any chance?' We obviously hadn't recognised each other from rehearsals!

Somebody in the sopranos suggested we wear black. I groaned and a lady near me had to go on a shopping trip for a black blouse. Still, it did look smart and professional.

Our performance went well and was a profound experience. (The sing-along hymns, though, didn't work for our audience as they were rather high and relatively unknown.) My tenor friend mentioned that the famous organist, Gillian Weir, has been there to listen. He decided, tactfully, not to inform our organist, Brian Tanner, beforehand. She had been impressed and found 'The Crucifixion' a moving experience.

Even my husband, Roger, had kind things to say. He said he had enjoyed it, but wouldn't be rushing out to buy the CD. Hopefully there will be another joint venture in the future.

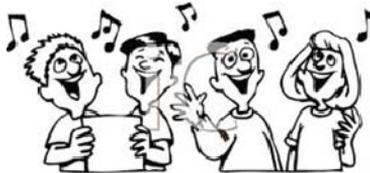
~~~~~

Elvet Methodist Church



THE BIG SING

Supporting Christian Aid



Thursday 4th June 2015

Come and hear singers
from local Durham primary schools.

Tea and Coffee served from 5.00

The Big Sing starts at 6.00



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

THE WEEK IN BOWBURN

Sundays **10.30 am** **Morning Worship**

Wednesdays **2 - 3 pm** **Prayer & Fellowship Meeting**
last Weds of month.

Thursdays 9.00 am * "Drop-in"

5.30 pm * Brownies

(Contact: Karen Heron 07921377321)

7.15 pm * Guides

(Contact Rosalind [Ros] Waites 0191 377 9995)

** term-time only*

http://www.durhamdeernessmethodist.org.uk/wordpress/?page_id=10



THE WEEK AT NORTH ROAD

Sun **10.30 am Morning Worship**

Tues 10.00- 1.30(fortnightly) Craftworks with Mannas light lunch

Thurs 9.30-11.30 * Messy Mornings

Fri 11.00- 1.30 Mannas - Food and Friendship every Friday

Sat (second Saturday) Coffee Morning

9.00- 10.15 (third Saturday) Men's Breakfast

** term-time only*

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

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 (1st & 3rd Mon)**

5.30 p.m. Rainbows (Girls 5-7 yrs.) at St. Oswald's

5.45 p.m. Brownies (Girls 7-10 yrs) at St. Oswald's

6.00 p.m. Cubs (Open Group) [Boys and Girls 8-10½ yrs.]

7.30 p.m. Guides (Girls 10-14 yrs.) at St. Oswald's

7.30 p.m. Explorers (Open Group) [Mixed 14½-18 yrs.]

7.45 p.m. House Group at Newton Hall

or Shincliffe (alternate weeks)

Rainbows, Brownies and Guides contact number 372 1786

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 12 noon Lunch Stop ALL welcome (roughly equates with term-time)

2.00 p.m. Women's Fellowship (1st Wed)

Thurs 10.00 a.m. Arts & Crafts Workshop

7.30 p.m. Thursday Club for All (alternate weeks)

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

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

Ministers

Rev Shaun Swithenbank BSc

Tel: 340 9701

Rev Andy Longe

Tel: 384 1221

Deacon Annette Sharp

Tel: 373 7446



DON'T FORGET

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

July 26th

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

by phone on Durham 384 7305

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

Alternatively, those at **Shincliffe** and **Bowburn** can contact
Liz Atkinson on 01388 329437.

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

Those at **Framwellgate Moor** can contact Eileen Maughan.
eileenmaughan@yahoo.co.uk