

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

# NEWSLETTER

for Bowburn, Shincliffe and  
Elvet Methodists

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



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

APR-MAY-JUN 11

## *A letter from our Minister*

*Dear Friends,*

### Resurrection People

At Easter we celebrate the message of good news 'He is alive !'. It is both a message of hope and a statement of belief. Yet for many it is one of the biggest stumbling blocks to becoming a Christian. People are left puzzled by the whole idea of resurrection; puzzled by questions about life after death; puzzled as to how we express this hope we hold. Are we any less confused today than those first disciples were ?

I came across a book some time ago entitled 'The Easter Spirit'. I have found some helpful material here for Easter, and much that sheds light on the meaning of Easter and what it is to live with confidence, as resurrection people.

Firstly, I believe we must stress that Jesus did not simply promise physical life after death, he promised **eternal life**, life in all its fullness, **the sharing of his risen life now**. We live in a physical, material world and yet human beings also yearn for, and need, to do more than just occupy a point in space - even scientists admit that '*Matter has no substance at all; it is merely the dynamic, rhythmic gyration of energy coming and going*'. Spiritual things matter and, even if we believe that the perfection of all things only comes after death, we can experience the quality of life in the grace and love of God here and now. This, then, is '*the resurrection which comes to the individual, waking them to the surrounding world in an entirely new way*'.

Secondly, **we cannot separate the cross and the resurrection**, for, '*Good Friday would, alone, be too austere, too heartbreaking .. and .. Easter, if alone, would not have drained the Cup ..! of the suffering of human life.*'

Christianity is that unique combination of life and death which joins heaven to earth. The spiritual and physical choices Jesus made are the choices we all have. It is in speaking through us, and sometimes through our suffering that Christ speaks to us all the words of life.

Finally, **by forgiveness Jesus changed people's lives. His life gave hope** to a dark world, and his death and resurrection showed to all who would follow him that his love can never be destroyed. If we dare to believe that such love can overcome evil, then we can truly live in freedom as a resurrection people.

So, be awake to the new life which is in the world all around us, share with others the hope which we share, and, as we begin to live as resurrection people, his love will speak ...

A flower has opened in my heart ...  
What flower is this, what flower of spring,  
What simple, secret thing ?  
It is the peace that shines apart,  
The peace of daybreak skies that bring  
Clear song and wild swift wing.  
Heart's miracle of inward light,  
What powers unknown have sown your seed  
And your perfection freed ?  
O flower within me wondrous white,  
I know you only as my need  
And my unsealed sight.

*(Siegfried Sassoon)*

*Shaun Swithenbank*

## **WORSHIP IN APRIL**

### **Bowburn**

- 3rd **Mothering Sunday**  
10.30 a.m. Rev Shaun Swithenbank
- 10th **Passion Sunday**  
10.30 a.m. Mrs Anne Offler
- 17th **Palm Sunday**  
10.30 a.m. Rev Shaun Swithenbank
- 24th **Easter Day**  
10.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Paul Golightly

### **Elvet**

- 3rd **Mothering Sunday**  
10.45 a.m.- All-age worship and Parade  
Rev Calvin Samuel  
6.00 p.m. Ms Hattie Earle
- 10th **Passion Sunday**  
8.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Shaun Swithenbank  
10.45 a.m. Rev Shaun Swithenbank  
6.00 p.m. Rev E Strafford
- 17th **Palm Sunday**  
10.45 a.m Mrs Norma Nevin  
**6.00 p.m. United Service at Carrville**
- 24th **Easter Day**  
10.45 a.m. All-age Worship and Holy Communion  
Rev Shaun Swithenbank  
6.00 p.m. Mr Bill Offler

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**WORSHIP IN MAY**

**Bowburn**

- 1st 10.30 a.m. Mr Andrew Emison  
8th 10.30 a.m. Mr Pete Brazier  
15th 10.30 a.m. Rev Calvin Samuel  
22nd 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Shaun Swithenbank  
29th 10.30 a.m. Mr S Harvey

**Elvet**

- 1st 10.45 a.m. Rev Shaun Swithenbank  
6.00 p.m. Mr Brian Thornton  
8th 8.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Julie Lunn  
10.45 a.m. Mr John Scott  
6.00 p.m. Rev Nigel Johnson  
15th 10.45 a.m. **Choir Sunday** Rev Canon Rosalind Brown  
6.00 p.m. Holy Communion - Rev Shaun Swithenbank  
22nd 10.45 a.m. Mrs Margaret Wadge  
6.00 p.m. Rev Julie Lunn  
29th 10.45 a.m. Mr John Farish  
6.00 p.m. Mr Eric Watchman

## **WORSHIP IN JUNE**

### **Bowburn**

- 5th 10.30 a.m. Mrs L Kinchenton
- 12th 10.30 a.m. Mrs Ramona Samuel
- 19th 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Shaun Swithenbank
- 26th 10.30 a.m. Mr Pete Brazier

### **Elvet**

- 5th 10.45 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Shaun Swithenbank  
6.00 p.m. Prof Mark Wilson
- 12th 8.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Shaun Swithenbank  
10.45 a.m. Dr Jocelyn Bryan  
6.00 p.m. Rev Andrew Lunn
- 19th 10.45 a.m. **Junior Church Anniversary**  
Mrs Elaine Goy  
6.00 p.m. United Service and Holy Communion  
Rev Shaun Swithenbank and Rev Peter Kashouris
- 26th 10.45 a.m. Rev Shaun Swithenbank  
6.00 p.m. Rev Canon Caroline Dick

### **The Liturgy of Life of the Methodist Church in Singapore**

These are the ordination promises of Singaporean Methodist ministers. When Shaun presented them to us at a communion service, I was struck by their simplicity and **by the realisation that ordained and ordinary members of the church are closer than we would perhaps think.**

Called to something smaller (?)

The ordaining minister speaks to the ordinands

We are not ordaining you to ministry; that happened at your baptism.

We are not ordaining you to be a caring person; you are already called to that.

We are not ordaining you to serve the church in committees, activities, organisation; that is already implied in your membership.

We are not ordaining you to become involved in social issues, race, ecology, politics, revolution; for that is laid upon every Christian.

We are ordaining you to something smaller and less spectacular:

- to read and interpret those sacred stories of our community, so that they may speak a word to people today
- to remember and practise those rituals and rites of meaning that in their poetry address people at the level where change operates
- to foster in community through word and sacrament that encounter with truth that will set men and women free to minister as the body of Christ

We are ordaining you to the word and sacraments and pastoral care. God grant you grace not to betray but uphold it, not to deny but affirm it, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**May we all absorb these promises and commitments.**



*All together now!*



Jesus wants me for a sunbeam to shine for Him each day.  
 In every way try to please Him - at home, at school, at play!  
*A sunbeam, a sunbeam -*  
*Jesus wants me for a sunbeam!*  
*A sunbeam, a sunbeam -*  
*I'll be a sunbeam for Him!*

When a knight won his spurs, in the stories of old,  
 He was gentle and brave, he was gallant and bold;  
 With a shield on his arm and a lance in his hand,  
 For God and for valour he rode through the land.

No charger have I, and no sword by my side,  
 Yet still to adventure and battle I ride,  
 Though back into storyland giants have fled,  
 And the knights are no more and the dragons are dead.

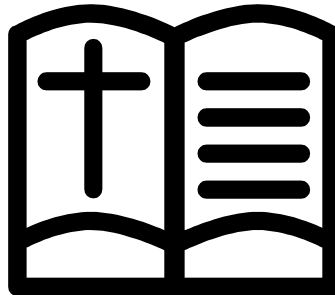
Let faith be my shield and let joy be my steed  
 'Gainst the dragons of anger, the ogres of greed;  
 And let me set free with the sword of my youth,  
 From the castle of darkness, the power of the truth.

Hear the pennies dropping; listen as they fall.  
 Every one for Jesus, He shall have them all.  
*Dropping, dropping, dropping, dropping,*  
*Hear the pennies fall.*  
*Every one for Jesus, He shall have them all!*

Now when we are little, pennies are our store,  
 But, Lord, when we're older, then we'll give you more.  
*Dropping .....*

*Ah! They don't write them  
 like that any more!*

**Biblefresh**  
It could change your world



Revd. Doctor Peter Phillips is in charge of the CODEC initiative at St John's College. (No - I can't work out what CODEC means either. You could try visiting the website to see if you can figure it out: [www.dur.ac.uk/codec](http://www.dur.ac.uk/codec).)

I have worked out that CODEC is a series of projects: so, Bex Lewis is preparing a series of housegroup sessions, with a linked website for this Lent. The housegroup material is called BigRead 2011 and the website is BigBible. Bex is looking for good examples of the Bible being used in positive, life-affirming ways. Can you help?

David Wood (this has to be the David Wood we all know and love who became a postman before he became a minister) is working with a number of churches in Swaledale to explore how people's knowledge and understanding of the Bible might be enhanced.

Peter Phillips is hoping to expand David's work to other churches in the Methodist Connexion. Could this be something for you to help with?

**Ex-Methodist President  
to become Leader of the Corrymeela Community**

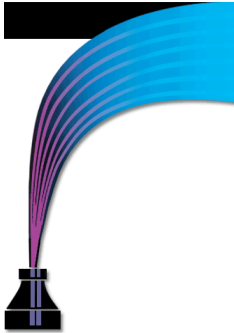


Ireland's Corrymeela Community is committed to reconciliation in Ireland and throughout the world. The Revd Dr Inderjit Bhogal becomes leader of the Community in April of this year.

The Corrymeela Community has 150 members and over 5,000 friends and supporters throughout the world.

Dr Bhogal said: "We will play our part to end hatred and hostility and to build harmonious and hospitable communities that celebrate diversity and in which all are welcome, belong equally, have sanctuary and are safe."





## EDITORIAL

Dear Friends,

I was talking - or, to be more accurate, listening - to a man who was telling me all about being hauled up before the courts on a charge of ABH (actual bodily harm). This man seemed perfectly normal to me, but, as I listened, it became clear that his ethical code was very different from mine. (By the way, according to my collocutor, the Crown Court judge had seen him as the righteous person in the violent encounter he was describing, and the man I was listening to was acquitted.)

I began to think about how far we all are from each other's reality. The only person we can really know is ourselves, and I think we spend a lot of time pretending, even to ourselves - well, I do. Unlike the man I listened to, I am very keen that others should be as unaware as possible of my failings.

What's my way forward? The Old Testament prophet, Micah, offers good advice.

*What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*  
(Micah 6, 8)

Yours in Christ,

*Jackie*

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### NIGHTSTOP

Those of us who have lived in Durham for years have been familiar with the name from our student days - Nightstop, a place to go if things are so wrong at home.

Volunteer hosts provide somewhere to sleep so that vulnerable people do not have to sleep on the streets. Hosts receive specialist training so that they can provide a safe, clean and warm environment for the vulnerable. They are inspiring people, essential to Nightstop.

Nightstop provides emergency accommodation for all sorts of vulnerable people, but mainly for the young, those in the 16-25 age bracket. Nightstop then works to provide longer term accommodation for those accommodated under emergency conditions.

So - what is an emergency placement? The person on placement will be provided with a private room, an evening meal and breakfast the following morning. That person will also have appropriate washing facilities for themselves and their clothes. The provider should be ready to offer a listening ear, if it is necessary.

Nightstop can last for up to ten nights, as Nightstop searches for a more permanent solution to the person's housing problems.

Nightstop is based in the Oxford Street Methodist Church in Whitley Bay, phone number: 0191 253 617.

**Each year Nightstop provides over 145,000 "bed nights".**

**They also work to rebuild family relationships and to offer young people the chance to fulfil their potential through education, volunteering, training and jobs.**

To find out more about Nightstop, email [jackie.hall@depauluk.org](mailto:jackie.hall@depauluk.org).

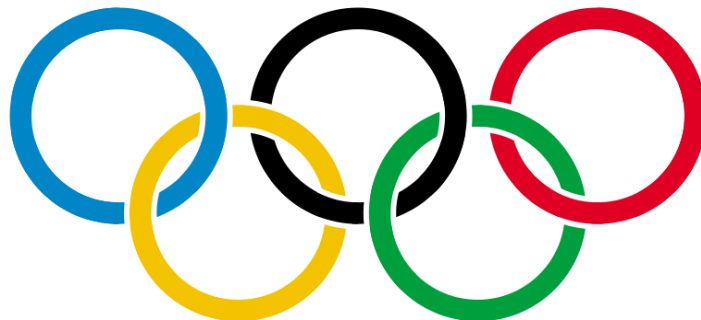
## Refreshment for children and youth workers

Are you involved in work with children or young people or in the community? Then - whether you are paid or voluntary - The Well is for you.

The Well is a network for all working with children and young people associated with the Methodist Church. It includes advice and guidance, access to resources and training, invitations to retreat days and conferences as well as updates on news and the opportunity to share ideas and support with others working in the same field.

Joining The Well network is free.

## The Olympics: the countdown continues



Booking for tickets to watch the Olympics has just opened, but hundreds of churches are already planning their response to the 2012 Olympic Games. If you are not one of them, the [On Your Marks](#) tour during May and June gives ideas about how your church can be involved. The presentation comes from [More Than Gold](#), the agency established by the main denominations to help churches respond to the 2012 Games. The Games provide a unique opportunity for churches to awaken fresh interest in what it is that makes us different and how people can relate to God. More Than Gold has a tried and tested programme of outreach, hospitality and service which will enable every church to engage with this once in a lifetime opportunity.

## **BAPTISMS**



We have celebrated Christ's love and welcomed into the Church Community at Bowburn

13 February *Riley DUNN*

27 March *Leon WILSON*

*Welcome*

## **WEDDINGS**

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

7 January *David YOUNG* and *Carole THOMPSON*

19 February *Karl CHAPMAN* and *Sarah GIBSON*

## **FUNERALS**

Our loving sympathy is extended to the family of

*Lilian SCHOFIELD*

whose funeral was held at Bowburn on 21 March.

A Thanksgiving Service for the life of former Elvet Minister,  
Rev Raymond Short took place on 18th March 2011  
at Weeke Methodist Church in Winchester.

*In Memoriam*

**ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE**

**New Year's Honours, 2011**



We are delighted to announce that an **MBE** was awarded to:-

**Dr David Williams**

for services to Media Studies in the North East.

Dr Williams has, as many of us know, done extensive research into the history of the cinema. This is the man who revealed to us that the earliest projector at the Palace in Durham was known as the "cathodoscope". Well!

We have also, over the years, enjoyed the film programmes which David has put together for us. He has unearthed some treasures from the beginnings of cinematography over 100 years ago. Long may his good work continue.

**ECO News.**



Circuit Eco Group (Meetings at North Road , 7.30 p.m.)  
A series of ecologically based Bible studies

28 March **Restoration and Redemption**

18 April **Living in the Kingdom**

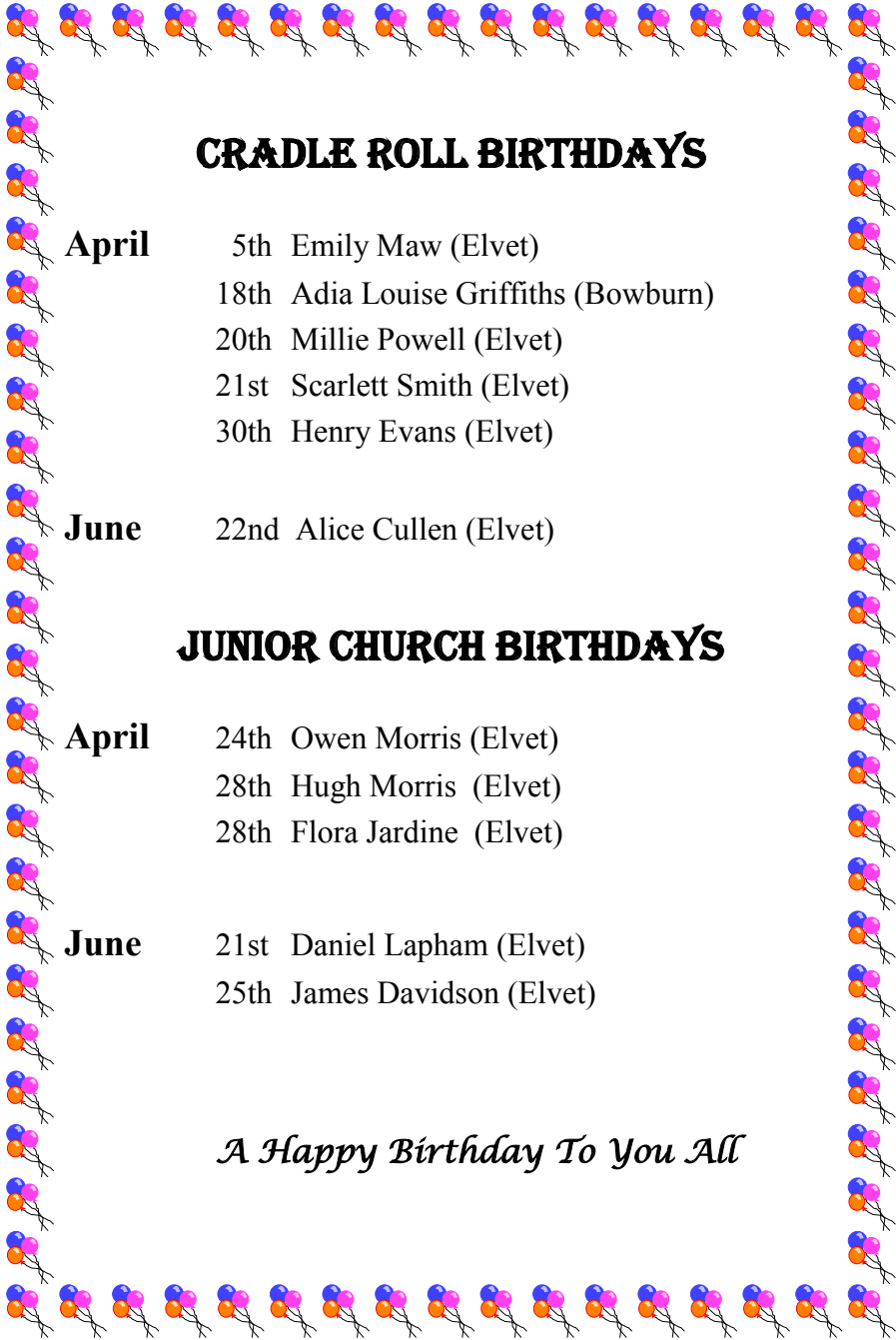
23 May To be confirmed

**ECO News.**

## **Christian Ecology Link**

### **Ordinary Christians' Extraordinary times**

Did you know that you can read Eco news on the Web ?  
Search for the **Christian Ecology link (CEL)** and you  
will be surprised.



**CRADLE ROLL BIRTHDAYS**

- April**      5th Emily Maw (Elvet)  
                  18th Adia Louise Griffiths (Bowburn)  
                  20th Millie Powell (Elvet)  
                  21st Scarlett Smith (Elvet)  
                  30th Henry Evans (Elvet)

- June**        22nd Alice Cullen (Elvet)

**JUNIOR CHURCH BIRTHDAYS**

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

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

*A Happy Birthday To You All*

**Project 2010-2011 – Justice First**

**Working with people in the Tees Valley who are seeking asylum**

Thanks to you all, this year's Project is continuing to go well. People have been extremely generous and supportive and we have already raised well over £11,000. The Treasure hunt was brilliantly organised by Chris and Elaine Goy and lots of people came, in spite of the bad weather. The delayed Pantomime was well worth waiting for and demonstrated some extraordinary and often unexpected talents. The calendar sales and the talents board have been profitable and we have had some very generous donations. Very many thanks to everybody who has contributed in all of these ways.

The Vigil to remember asylum seekers who have had to return to their own countries, where they often have again to face torture or death, was held in the evening service on 27 February. Kath Sainsbury and others from Justice First took part. We heard very moving stories which reminded us of the importance of the work we are supporting.

As I write, we have many things to look forward to over the next few months: the Indian banquet at the Millennium Restaurant – always very popular and enjoyable (thanks to the Scotts); a concert of Baroque Instrumental Music on 12 March; Who's Coming for (Sunday) lunch on 13 March; and a choral concert organised by Arthur Kay on 2 April.

Please continue your generous support.

Pauline Watson

Oh no! OH YES! It's the Elvet panto!

***Robin Hood***

All proceeds to *Justice First*

The 2010 Elvet pantomime was hit by climate change. Well, what else could you call the ridiculously early snow in late 2010? Undaunted, the wonderful, the reliable, cast and crew laboured on to provide us, the audiences, in January, with what that we expect from their performance. Fellowship and fun! (I say "audiences" in the plural because I have it on reliable authority that no two performances are the same!)

By now, we have come to accept the stereotypes - and to enjoy them. Nothing and no-one is sacred - the relationships between men and women, those between adults and children - and, most importantly, the relationship between good and evil, are explored in *Robin Hood*, as in other, earlier pantos. For we must not forget that the panto is, in essence, entertainment. This year's panto provided that entertainment, as well as political reference, singing, and the opportunity for the audiences to participate – oh, yes, it did!

It was a joy to see the cast enjoy themselves so much! By now, Elvet pantos have become delightfully self-referential. We all know that Lynda Underwood will have to play a "baddie" – she even discussed with us the possibilities of playing a reformed character – but rejected it.

Our comic double act – Stuart Lawson and Anne Scott – continue to raise laughs by the most outrageous tricks! Many thanks, as always to them.

Finally, if you missed Chris Harder's turn as Elvis, the King – then you missed the very best of the pantomime

The support offered by sound, lighting, ticket sales, refreshments - and Doreen as narrator should not go unacknowledged. Fun for the audiences, fellowship for the participants - brilliant!

We all look forward to Elvet Panto 2011.



## Elvet Communion Collections

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

We have contributed these amounts to the charities as listed below:-

The **Christmas Eve collection** was added to the NCH Action for Children collection

**December and January** - Macmillan Cancer Care, £155.75p

**February** - The British Heart Foundation, £91.60p

**March** - St Margaret's Centre, amount collected currently unknown

We hope to contribute to the following charities during the next three months.

**April - NEPACS** is a long-standing charity in the North-East of England building bridges for prisoners, their families and the community. The society supports and assists prisoners, families and friends of prisoners in their visits to the prison and helps children visiting relatives in prison to feel welcome and find the experience as pleasant as possible. The society also relieves hardship due to the poverty of some offenders and their families and supports the education and training of offenders to help in their rehabilitation.

**May - Christian Aid** - This is a Christian organisation that insists the world can and must be swiftly changed to one where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty. It works globally to eradicate the causes of poverty, striving to achieve equality, dignity and freedom for all - regardless of faith or nationality. Christian Aid is part of a wider movement for social justice and provides urgent, practical and effective assistance where need is great, tackling the effects of poverty as well as its root causes. Its essential purpose is: to expose the scandal of poverty; to challenge and change structures and systems that favour the rich and powerful over the poor and marginalised.

**June - Youth for Christ** is a national Christian charity that was founded by Billy Graham in 1946. Working with around 300,000 young people each month, it draws alongside teens from every background and culture in Britain. Staff and countless local volunteers specialize in working with unchurched youth - communicating and demonstrating the Christian faith. Local centres tackle the real issues facing youth today such as - family breakdown, binge drinking, bullying and self-worth. It also helps churches to reach out to their local young people with relevant youth resources and evangelistic activity holidays.

## **Methodist Church responds to cries for help from Japan**

The Methodist Church in Britain's World Mission Fund has launched an appeal on behalf of its Partner Church in Japan following the recent catastrophic earthquake and tsunami.

Reports from the United Church of Christ in Japan (UCCJ) reveal that the 8.9 magnitude earthquake, which has left more than 10,000 people missing, has damaged at least 36 churches in the affected Sendai region.

Steve Pearce, the Methodist Church's partnership coordinator for Asia and the Pacific, said, "It is not possible to comprehend the scale of this disaster. Our hearts go out to our brothers and sisters there. Our Mission Partners in Japan are safe and well, but they are worried about people they know in the north and on the coast. I have assured my colleagues at UCCJ that Methodists in Britain and Ireland are praying for them and that we will respond to their financial appeal."

The Revd Makoto Kato, the executive secretary for ecumenical ministries at UCCJ, said, "We truly appreciate your deep concern and encouraging prayer following the gigantic earthquake which we have never ever experienced before. Churches in Tokyo are okay, but we are still not able to get contact with people in Sendai where the earthquake hit most severely. Please keep on praying for us."

You can donate to the World Mission Fund appeal via the Methodist Church [Just Giving](#) page or by sending a cheque payable to the "World Mission Fund" to Steve Pearce, World Church Relationships, at Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5JR. Postal donations should be labelled "Japan Appeal". If you are a UK taxpayer, you can gift aid your donation, which allows us to reclaim the tax you have already paid. Just include a completed [Gift Aid](#) form with your donation.

**The Waldensians - an ancient protestant sect**

A few of you may be familiar with Milton's rousing sonnet, "Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughtered saints". Milton recalls an atrocity perpetrated in his lifetime against the Waldensians or Valdesi; however, as so many came to find out, the "slaughtered saints" were just as brutal as those who slaughtered them. Conflict can be like that.

Nonetheless. modern day Valdesi look and sound like you and me. The past is behind them. Those I met in Como seem to have no need to recall the past - and were eagerly looking forward to the future as they prepared a new translation of the Bible.

I spent Christmas in Italy and, on Boxing Day, which, you may recall was a Sunday, I went with some friends to the Waldensian Church in Como. It is a church that I went to when I lived in Italy in the 1990s - that and the wonderful Methodist church in Milan. These Waldensian Christians predate Luther by a couple of centuries in their need to find God in the Bible and not in ritual. Finding out about them was a revelation to me.

I therefore present to you a translation of some of the material to be found in the pamphlet offered to those who drop in on their church. I do hope some of you will be able to visit and support these loyal Christians if you holiday in the northern region of Italy.

**"The church of Jesus Christ is made up of those who believe in Him and live according to His word. Only He knows who they are."**

**"We Waldensians particularly stress the reading of the Bible because it is the means by which God still speaks to us."**

**The Waldensians find inspiration in the Biblical commandment:**

**A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this, all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."**

Help people in poverty out of poverty

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 2011

# Christian Aid

**We believe in life before death**

This year Christian Aid Week takes place between Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May and 21<sup>st</sup> May inclusive and it is a time to celebrate transformation, and an opportunity to put ourselves in the frame of God's kingdom.

I am again co-ordinating Elvet's part in the week and this year the churches in the Durham Christian Aid Network are organising a number of fund raising initiatives. In addition to the House to House Collection there is to be a collection at Durham Railway Station on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup>, Friday 20<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> May. It is also hoped that collections at the Co-op and Sainsbury's Local at Newton Hall can be arranged. For these efforts to be successful volunteers are needed. The Railway Station, Co-op and Sainsbury's collections only require a small amount of time. No one would be expected to be involved with these collections for a whole day, though if anyone was willing to do this then they would not be turned away!

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

*David Ramsden*

Daring to dream the impossible



Christian Aid partner Soppexcca (pronounced so-pecks-ka) is an organisation with a vision. It is passionately committed to helping poor Nicaraguan coffee farmers to beat poverty.

Ten years ago, when Soppexcca was established, this seemed impossible. But now Soppexcca is a thriving collective of small cooperatives which helps farmers produce good-quality coffee, market it and put funds back into their own communities. It works with communities to understand their needs and empowers them to make their own visions a reality.

Gustavo Adolfo Talavera, an illiterate coffee farmer, had few prospects until Soppexcca gave him a loan, allowing him to expand his farm and build a small and environmentally sound processing plant. He had a dream of his children being able to read and write, and be educated. His dream became a reality when Soppexcca helped members of the community get enough resources together, and a group of parents built a school themselves.

Ten years ago, education would have seemed an impossible dream for Gustavo. But Soppexcca is enabling his community to dream dreams – and then to do what seems to be impossible.

The Christian life sets us within a story that speaks of transformation where it seems to be impossible; where life is brought to the world. And the gospel stories are clear that life is about more than just survival. The life that Jesus speaks of is abundant life, rich with possibility and hope and promise. For people in Gustavo's community, it's about education and prospects.



Cooperative living is about this abundant life. It's about seeing something achievable beyond oneself and working together to make life better for everyone. Fátima Ismael, Soppexcca's director, says: 'We're not just about bread for today, but also for tomorrow. But we don't just want bread, we want bread and honey and milk.' People like Fátima and Gustavo are seeing the bigger picture – going beyond what seems initially achievable and working together to make it a reality.

The good news is that we can be a part of this bigger picture too. When we give our time, money and energy this Christian Aid Week, we are looking beyond ourselves and enabling others to do what seems impossible. This bigger picture is the world as it could look if we allowed the kingdom of God to be a reality, if we really believed in abundant life for all. It's the world that Jesus showed us in his life and ministry: a world where we stop living for ourselves and start living for others, a world where we don't put limits on love and justice, a world where the concept of our neighbour is startlingly redefined.

It's a bigger world and it's an unsettling world. But it's a world that allows for transformation in ways that we may never have imagined, to dream dreams and to do what people tell us is impossible. Of course it's about transformation for people like Gustavo. But it's also a world that offers huge transformation to ourselves and to our churches, as we place ourselves in the frame of a bigger picture where the power of love has no limits.

**The Child at the Centre**

By the age of three, a child's future success in life has already been greatly influenced by how they have been cared for and treated. What they have learned from those around them affects how they see themselves and others and how they face the world.

NCH believes that every child should have the chance to live their life to the full. We have been working to make this vision a reality for over 135 years. Around half of our projects are family and children's centres, including Sure Start programmes which support parents and their young children who are vulnerable, under pressure, living in poverty or at risk from abuse.

**The NCH Prayer**

**Lord Jesus,**

You showed us how to put the child at the centre  
when they were pushed to one side  
to be seen but not heard.

You were encouraging, positive, gentle,  
generous with your time,  
patient in your listening  
and loving in your response.

Let us put the child at the centre  
and give them safe space and boundaries  
to grow and develop a sense of themselves,  
of others and the world.

Let us give them courage when they need it -  
freedom to play, laugh and cry  
and, above all, let us give them  
the same endless love that you offer to each one of us.

Help us to find the child in ourselves  
and put them at the centre of who we are  
so that we rediscover the trust, honesty and  
vulnerability in our relationship with you  
and so come closer  
to seeing and bringing about your kingdom.

**AMEN**

**THE WEEK IN BOWBURN**

Sundays	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Morning Worship</b> 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)
	<b>2 - 3 pm</b>	Prayer & Fellowship Meeting <b>last Weds of month.</b>
Thursdays	9.00 am	* "Drop-in" * <i>term-time only</i>

**THE WEEK AT ELVET**

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

**ELVET and BOWBURN METHODIST CHURCHES**

**Minister:**

Rev Shaun Swithenbank BSc

Tel: 384 8755

and

**University Chaplain**

Rev. Julie Lunn, BEd, MA

Tel: 384 7950



**DON'T FORGET**

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

**May 29th**

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

by phone on Durham 384 7305

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

Alternatively, those at **Shincliffe** and **Bowburn** can contact  
Liz Atkinson on Durham 377 0687.

