

S_{outh} E_{ast} D_U rham M_{ethodist}

NEWSLETTER

for Bowburn, Shincliffe and
Elvet Methodists

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



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

DEC 06 - JAN 07

A letter from our Minister

Dear Friends,

Yesterday a friend and I were talking about the Incarnation. It started as a conversation on that topic which has become so familiar that it seems now almost part of the Christmas tradition itself – the bemoaning of the fact that Christmas comes to our shops and streets so early each year. There is no sense of waiting, expectation, looking forward in hope – all those great theological themes we remember and celebrate in Advent.

During this conversation my friend said, ‘the Incarnation really happens in March, when Jesus is conceived.’ And she’s absolutely right. That is the moment when God takes on our humanity, when the Incarnation of God in Christ all begins. And we talked together about how much more waiting there is on that timescale, the whole nine month period of the pregnancy, for expectation, preparation and looking forward, waiting for the birth.

In our church we don’t tend to celebrate the feast of the Annunciation which is on March 25th, but we do remember this event on the fourth Sunday of Advent, just before Christmas, which telescopes the waiting time into one week or less.

But waiting is important. It provides an opportunity to treasure the secret hidden joy and expectant hope enshrined in the promise of God coming among us.

This wonderful poem by Elizabeth Jennings captures something of that treasure in Mary’s heart, which she will hold when the ecstasy of the angel’s visit has passed, and life resumes its normality. Yet all is changed, because God now stirs within her.

The Annunciation

Nothing will ease the pain to come
Though now she sits in ecstasy
And lets it have its way with her.
The angel's shadow in the room
Is lightly lifted as if he
Had never terrified her there.

The furniture again returns
To its old simple state. She can
Take comfort from the things she knows
Though in her heart new loving burns
Something she never gave to man
Or god before, and this god grows

Most like a man. She wonders how
To pray at all, what thanks to give
And whom to give them to. "Alone
To all men's eyes I now must go"
She thinks, "And by myself must live
With a strange child that is my own."

So from her ecstasy she moves
And turns to human things at last
(Announcing angels set aside).
It is a human child she loves
Though a god stirs beneath her breast
And great salvations grip her side.

May expectation, hope and joy be God's gifts to you this Advent and
Christmastide.

Julie

WORSHIP IN DECEMBER

Bowburn

- 3rd 10.45 a.m. Dr Jocelyn Bryan
6.00 p.m. Circuit Service at Carrville
- 10th 10.45 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Neil Dixon
- 17th 10.45 a.m. Rev Julie Lunn
- 24th 10.45 a.m. **Carol Service** - Rev Julie Lunn
- 25th 10.45 a.m. Rev Julie Lunn
- 31st 10.30 a.m. Miss Dorothy Hale

Elvet

- 3rd 10.45 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Andrew Letby
6.00 p.m. Circuit Service at Carrville
- 10th 8.30 a.m. Holy Communion - Rev Heather Taylor
10.45 a.m. **Parade and Gift Service**
Mr Eric Watchman
6 p.m. Rev Neil Dixon and Rev Dr David Kennedy
- 17th **3 p.m. Carol Service** - Rev Neil Dixon
- 24th 10.45 a.m. Rev Neil Dixon
11.30 p.m. Holy Communion - Rev Neil Dixon
- 25th 10.30 a.m. Rev Neil Dixon
- 31st 10.45 a.m. Rev Neil Dixon

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

Church Weekend away at Seahouses

by Janelle Dundee

The time had arrived for the Elvet Weekend away. Stuart Lawson and Barbara Woodfield had again undertaken to cater for everyone who was going, from 13th to 15th October 2006 (they must enjoy it!!!!).

This year we were going to Seahouses, a place where the Dundee family had never been. I was personally looking forward to the weekend to catch up with old friends from Penrith (those from Elvet will remember David, Claire, Christopher and Peter Middleton) and, hopefully, make new acquaintances.

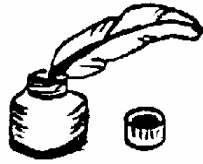
On our arrival at the Seahouses Hostel, which was originally a girls' school and farm outbuilding of a former vicarage, we were impressed by the location and the homely feel to the place. A few had arrived before us but Stuart and Barbara had been busy preparing the evening meal and we could help ourselves to tea/coffee and explore the building.

Gradually everyone arrived and we all sat down for our evening meal which, as always, was fantastic. We enjoyed chatting and before everyone retired for the night, we went into a room which is used by the neighbouring church, St Paul's, for meditation and singing led by Claire and the group from Penrith.

The next morning, after a hearty breakfast, it was time to decide what activities people were going to do. A group of us were going on a walk organised by Brian and Hilary Stout. Others were going to explore Seahouses and see what was on offer, e.g. Crazy Golf, Bamburgh Castle, etc.

The walk (about 6 miles) took us from Bamburgh around the coastline and back to Bamburgh – the scenery and views were spectacular. When we came to walking on the beach, the sand was so soft and white, the sky was so blue and so was the sea. It was truly breathtaking. It was hard to believe it was the middle of October. On our return from our walk some people stopped and had a coffee, etc, at the Copper Kettle, a lovely quaint coffee shop in Bamburgh.

Continued on page 7



EDITORIAL

Dear Friends,

I do hope I have developed a loyal readership because what I am about to write builds from an article in the last newsletter.

You may remember that, there, I wrote a little about the Dalit Madonna. I had discovered that the word “Dalit” means “broken”. Recently, in the news, I have further discovered that “Dalit” is the term now used for the Hindu caste formerly known as the “Untouchables”. The reason I discovered this was that many of this caste had decided to undergo a mass conversion from Hinduism to Buddhism. They felt alienated and despised by their own religion.

Do we alienate and despise potential Christians? Do we reject God’s people, constantly emphasising a false difference between us and them, instead of looking carefully at our created shared humanity? Many of our contemporaries have decided to adopt other faiths - football, celebrity, nature worship. What should we do about this? We need to look at ourselves and our church practices. We need to consider how to present the Good News so that it can be received by all and not just by those who are already “tuned-in”.

I do not flatter myself that I have an avid readership in the 9 - 13 age range, but I wonder if parents and grandparents could direct the youngsters they know to page 14. Thank you.

We have received another wonderful letter from Judy and Alan Morrison in Tonga. It can be found on pages 17—19.

It’s the time of year to wish you all *Merry Christmas* and to remind you of the universality of Christ’s appeal.

“Glory to God in the highest heaven” Luke 2, 14

Jackie

Continued from page 5

That same evening some of the congregation of St Paul's including the vicar, Jane Wood, had come to join us for the evening meal and a quiz. We were also going to the Harvest Festival at the church on the Sunday morning so this was a good opportunity to get to know some of its members.

Once again, the meal was superb and everyone enjoyed getting to know each other. The quiz was ably prepared by Barbara and Doreen and, although our team didn't win, it was a great evening with plenty of laughter and conversation. Finally everyone was invited over to the church for a short meditation led by Chris Cornell. During the day Chris had taken photos in and around Seahouses and these were shown on a screen. It gave everyone a chance to reflect on their day and what everyone had enjoyed and observed. The church was beautifully lit with candles. It was the perfect end to a really enjoyable day (not to mention the fact that it was my birthday and one I won't forget).

On Sunday morning, after breakfast, everyone gathered at St Paul's for Harvest Festival and Communion. The church was packed and Stuart played the organ (is there no end to this man's talents?) accompanied by Claire and Jemima (from Penrith) on the violins.

It was a beautiful service and I, for one, felt really glad to have been able to share in their Harvest Festival and Communion.

After the service we had Sunday lunch (the toffee sauce with the apple pie was scrumptious) and we were all designated tasks to help to pack up and tidy the rooms, etc. Finally we all gathered in the enclosed paddock for a group photograph which the vicar, Jane Wood, was able to join in with.

We all agreed that it had been a wonderful weekend and we had enjoyed meeting up again and sharing in fellowship together.

I'm sure I can speak for the Dundee family and everyone who went to Seahouses, when I say that the weekend was a great success not only for the good food, good weather and comfortable accommodation, but also for the time spent chatting, relaxing and enjoying the chance to escape the pressures of everyday life.

Would you apply for this position?

Part-time opportunities for young carers to look after a parent, sibling or other relative

- Vital work, done for love and duty.
- No financial reward.
- On call 24/7. Inflexible hours (note: don't always fit with school hours)
- Must be prepared for others to make fun of you and have little or no time for yourself.
- Excellent stamina and emotional strength required.
- Join at least 175,000 others in the UK!

Many children and young people have no choice.

NCH young carers projects there whenever you need us

- Meet and make new friends with people just like you.
- Find a listening and sympathetic ear – you're not on your own
- Have fun and enjoy yourself
- Help and information
- Practical support
- The chance to act your age!

For more information, contact NCH

Thank you to all our Methodist friends who support us at Christmas so that we can support young carers, and other children and young people facing difficulties in their lives, all year round.

New for this Christmas – worship materials, prayer bookmarks and gift envelopes (gift aid form on the back) are available free of charge, together with other resources from our Supporter Helpline on 08457 626579 (calls charged at local rate, open 9am–5pm Mon to Fri) or visit our website www.nch.org.uk/methodist

News from “The Buzz”

Good news from the Methodist Church all over the country

SERVICE - on a treadmill?

From Mansfield Street, Derby Derwent Mission circuit

With the help of a gift we refurbished our hall. Our youngest member started a Parent and Baby group, which now has 18 members with 21 children. The son of one of our members has (with a partner) set up a mobile gym of treadmills and rowing machines to run fitness classes. The oldest 'user' is 80-plus! Such opportunities for service and outreach have given us a real sense of renewal, joy and hope.

E-mail contact: <mailto:meady78@hotmail.com>

Phone contact: Rita Wright 01332 513534

HEART OF WORSHIP

Heart of Worship is a conference, organised by the Methodist Church, for people who care about the development of worship and want to be empowered to make it better.

International speakers, a range of workshops and exhibitions will help to explore -

HOW we increase awareness of God's presence and celebrate God's love

HOW we underpin everything we do with God-centred worship and prayer.

Plus - lots of opportunities to worship together.

Heart of Worship

Friday 4th - Monday 7th May 2007

Venue Cymru, Llandudno.

<http://www.HoW2007.org.uk> for more details and booking form.

WHAT DOES THE COMMUNION SERVICE SIGNIFY?

The Brancepeth Close housegroup, having started to study more deeply the implications for churchgoers of the service of Holy Communion, agreed that a very good explanation of its significance comes in the preface to Iona Abbey's Sunday morning Service of Communion *Concerning the Celebration of Communion* (© The Iona Community from *The Iona Abbey Worship Book*, published by Wild Goose Publications, Iona Community, Unit 16, Six Harmony Row, Glasgow G51 3BA, Scotland), which we reproduce here (with one or two very slight alterations) with grateful acknowledgements.

We hope this commentary will provide everyone at Elvet, young or old, with new spiritual food for thought as they approach the table of the Lord in future.

Jesus took the bread and the wine

After the Word of God has been proclaimed, the first act of our liturgy of communion is, in response, to offer the wine and the bread. The elements are signs of the body of Jesus and of his self-giving, and are also signs of our offering. The bread and wine we offer as gifts of the earth and work of human hands also represent our bodies and our lives, which we again offer to God. As St Augustine said to his people when they had placed the elements on the altar: *'There you are upon the table; there you are in the cup'*.

Jesus blessed the bread and the wine

Just as Jesus was blessed with God's Spirit, so we, having offered ourselves, seek a blessing on our lives and on the bread and wine; we seek a renewing of the life of Christ in us. It is a 're-remembering' or 're-bodilying' of Christ. It is over our lives as well as over the bread and wine that the words of blessing are spoken. As St Chrysostom said, through the blessed food and drink we are renewed as *'flesh of Christ's flesh, and bone of Christ's bone'*.

Jesus broke the bread and poured out the wine

In the breaking of the bread we remember the brokenness of Jesus' body on the cross and commit ourselves to travelling the path of sacrificial love. Jesus' words at the Last Supper – '*Do this ...*' – challenge us not merely to break bread together but to open ourselves to the cost of discipleship. St Paul wrote to the early Christians in Rome: '*Present your bodies as a living sacrifice*'. Just as on the road to Emmaus it was in the breaking of the bread that the risen Christ was known to his disciples (Lk.24), so in the self-giving of our lives is Christ known to the world today.

Jesus shared the bread and the wine

During the distribution of the bread and the wine we remember Jesus sharing his life with the disciples and with the poor and sick, and we are called to a sharing of our own lives and possessions with one another and with the poor. The final blessing of the service returns us to where we began. As we begin by bringing all that we are into communion, so we end by taking our renewed selves back into the details of our common life ... [and] continue our celebration of communion out in the place of the ordinary. And in sharing ourselves with one another, we share Christ.

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MRDF 'SMALL MIRACLES' ADVENT CALENDAR

The new MRDF advent calendar is now available. It features:

- * beautiful pictures and Bible references
- * photos and stories from MRDF's work with Dalit women in India

The calendar costs £3 per copy, available by calling 020 7467 5132 or by sending a cheque to MRDF, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR.

Advent calendar fliers are also available to distribute at an alternative gift market or pre-Christmas event.

BAPTISMS

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

- 24th September **Isaac Stoker**
and **Kyle Caiden Corner** (at Bowburn)
- 15th October **Eve Sienna Berriman** (at Bowburn)
- 22nd October **Milena Dorothea Scales**
and **Nathan Russell Kelly** (at Elvet)
- 12th November **Chloe Margaret Smith** (at Elvet)

Welcome



WEDDINGS

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

- 16th September **Gavin Breeze** and **Jacky Hassard**
- 23rd September **Adam Butler** and **Catherine Jennings**

Congratulations.



FUNERALS

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

- Doreen Roach** (Funeral, September 29th)
- Mary Egglestone** (Funeral, October 10th and, at 99, the oldest person in Bowburn)
- Caroline Foreman** (Funeral, October 18th)

In Memoriam

I'm fine, thank you

Distributed by Bill Craddock M.B. E., the Chairman of the Washington
Age Concern.

The Re-cycled Teenager

There is nothing the matter with me,
I'm as healthy as I can be.
I have arthritis in both my knees
And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.
My pulse is weak, and my blood is thin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

Arch supports I have for my feet,
Or I wouldn't be able to be on the street,
Sleep is denied me night after night,
But every morning I find I'm alright.
My memory is failing, my head's in a spin
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

The moral is this - as my tale I unfold -
That for you and me who are growing old,
It's better to say "I'm fine" with a grin
Than to let folks know the shape I'm in.

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GOD'S GREEN EARTH?

The Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church have established the Methodist/URC Environmental Network. This initiative seeks to inspire churches and individuals to take direct action against climate change and make a commitment to caring for the environment. The Network is supported by a website and a bi-monthly e-newsletter. Anyone can subscribe.

The priority for the Network is to connect with those who are active on environmental matters, and encourage people to make the care of God's creation a central part of local church life and witness.

Subscribe to the Environmental Network at:
<http://www.methodist.org.uk/static/forms/ensubscribe.htm>

MCTXT4U

mctxt4u is a great new weekly free text service aimed at **9-13s** launched by the Methodist Children team.

Text subjects cover:

Word - bible text, poem, book recommendation,

Action - could be something to do, read, respond to

Challenge - practical or thought provoking

Prayer - Actual prayers, prayer ideas, people to pray for.

Ur World Heads-up - what is happening in the world (news), fashion, culture, issues involving children and young people.

Da Buzz - Latest crazes, issues, films, music, jokes

Links - Useful web links

Methodist Children are also launching a new style bulletin board for the 9-13s called DaBlab (on new 9-13's pages of www.methodistchildren.org.uk from 1 October) and will be encouraging their 'texters' to build an online community and share their views and news.

To join up for free texts, text JOIN to 07786205203.

For more information see [http://](http://www.methodistchildren.org.uk)

www.methodistchildren.org.uk

Could I ask readers in the 9 - 13 age group to visit this text service and/or website and tell me what they're like? THANX! Ed.

WHERE CHRISTIANITY MEETS CULTURE

The Interface website (<http://www.theinterface.org.uk>) is an initiative of the Methodist Interface Group, a group that explores contemporary issues from a faith-based perspective. The site was created with the aim of providing a friendly space for Methodists and others to discuss hot news topics and their implications for our faith.

A couple of new articles of 300 to 500 words are posted on the site every week, covering a range of topics, from the new album by The Streets to stem cell research. The contributors are people who are very knowledgeable about a given field or who simply have a strong interest in a particular issue.

The Methodist Interface Group would like to offer **you** the opportunity to receive a weekly e-mail that will remind you of the site's existence and encourage you to take part. The more people sign up, the greater the likelihood of the Interface website becoming a truly active, dynamic place where people can go to discuss topical issues.

If, after looking at the site, you would be interested in receiving the weekly email, please contact Alice Lambert at mail to: lamberta@methodistchurch.org.uk

NCH Christmas Concert Saturday 9th December 2006 at 7 pm

Durham NCH Support Group are holding the annual Christmas Concert on Saturday 9th December 2006 at 7 pm at Elvet Methodist Church, Durham

The concert features, once again, the Durham Constabulary Brass Band, and the highly acclaimed S.N.U.G. (Special Needs Unity Group)

Tickets, including refreshments, are £5.00 (family ticket £15.00)

These are available from Sheila Coltman (tel 0191 388 3161), Janelle Dundee (tel 0191 377 3228), Brenda Farish (tel 0191 386 1948) David Ramsden (tel 0191 386 8297)

NCH Diaries

The NCH Diaries for 2007 are now available at a price of £2.00 from Janelle Dundee (tel 0191 377 3228)

COULD YOU LEAD THE BRITISH METHODIST YOUTH CHOIR?

The British Methodist Youth Choir is looking for a new Chairperson.

The BMYC is a group of approximately 20 young Christians aged 16-27 who perform approximately 4-5 concerts around Britain every year, including in the past at the British Methodist Conference and the World Methodist Conference.

They will be celebrating their 25th anniversary next year, which will include a reunion concert to celebrate the anniversary, along with the 300th birthday of Charles Wesley and the 200th anniversary of the formation of the Primitive Methodist Church. The concert will be shown on Songs of Praise.

The BMYC is self funding from ticket sales and donations and is run by a committee. The present Chair of the committee is stepping down and the BMYC is looking for a replacement. The job description is as follows;

Chairman - to serve for three years.

To chair all AGM, EGM and committee meetings.

To represent BMYC to committees and organisations within the Methodist Church and to raise awareness of the potential for excellence which exists within the choir by whatever means possible.

To attend as many choir events as possible.

To act as arbitrator in event of dispute among choir and/or committee members.

To undertake actions as required by resolution of the choir or committee.

To liaise with the Administrator, Secretary, Treasurer and other members of the committee.

If you are interested in volunteering for the role, or would like to find out more, please contact the choir administrator:

Kevin Soulsby

E-mail: <mailto:admin@bmyc.info>

Tel: 01454612100

88 Dewfalls Drive, Bristol, BS32 9BT.

See also: <http://www.bmyc.info>.

Tonga news and a wedding
Another letter from Judy Morrison about life “Down Under”

Significant times in Tonga!

It's been the experience of a lifetime to be here for the funeral of King Tupou IV of Tonga, who died in hospital in New Zealand on Sunday, 10 September. I'd love to share with you the atmosphere and colour we have been privileged to observe and share.

All the traditional and formal protocols were observed and the result has been an amazing week of celebrations and cultural experiences. We have been involved in some and followed others on Tonga TV.

The King's body was returned to Tonga on September 13th and transported in procession to the Royal Palace, where it was placed in the throne room overlooking the sea. The choir from Sia'atoutai was honoured to be asked to be one of the first groups to lead the prayers and singing outside the Palace that evening (for two hours!). We were invited to be part of that. The depth of emotion expressed by the prayer leaders and the inspirational singing of the choir were quite moving.

The singing and prayers went on each night from 6pm to midnight for the week leading up to the funeral, and right through the night on the final evening. Various churches were rostered to take a one hour time slot each night, and during the day significant members of the community, both traditional and civic, lined up to pay their respects and to view the King. We were indeed privileged to be invited to be part of that as a small group of palangis from Sia'toutai College, accompanying Dr Dean Drayton, the immediate past-President of the Uniting Church in Australia, who was here as the church's formal representative. The Palace grounds were supervised by the royal guards in full military uniform and scattered with Tongan officials all dressed in black and wearing enormous straw mats and aprons. The closer their relationship to the King, the bigger the mats, so many of them were voluminous. We were presented first of all to Princess Pilolevu, who sat enveloped in a huge mat under a marquee in the grounds. We sat in a semi-circle on the mats at a little distance from her and were welcomed by a Tongan official. Dean Drayton then spoke on behalf of the Australian church and we each went forward, bowing low, to shake her hand and express our condolences. She is a very gracious and approachable woman (she asked Alan about his work in the College and how he was settling into Tongan life) and works incredibly hard for the country. She and another younger princess, appointed by the new King, spent the week receiving groups and accepting gifts from village representatives in long traditional ceremonies at the Palace and the Royal Villa, an estate just out of town where the Crown Prince has lived.

After greeting the Princess, we were escorted to the throne room where we each went forward to bow and pause in front of the King's coffin, and then signed the Visitors' Book - our names are there with those of

royalty and prestige from all over the world.

The new King, Toupou V, was sworn in immediately after the death of the King in a closed ceremony in Nuku'alofa. He will be crowned in about a year's time, but has already officially assumed the powers of the monarch. There is much speculation about how he will handle the role and pressure from the Pro-Democracy movement for significant changes to the governance of the country. He has already announced that he is disposing of his significant business investments in the country and that has gone down well, though people wait to see the details.

There has been an enormous influx of people to Nuku'alofa - Tongans coming from the outer islands and from overseas to be here for the funeral, plus foreign dignitaries. There has been an almost festive air around as many buildings are swathed in purple and black bunting, people are meeting and greeting in the market, and businesses have been busy selling food for catering and material for mourning clothes. All the groups which have participated in the singing and praying have been provided with refreshment afterwards - and not just a token: we each received a Tongan-size takeaway pack containing chicken pieces, a sausage, root vegetables, a serve of curry, rice, and a drink! This fits with the Tongan tradition of generosity and hospitality but must cost a mint!

The evening before the funeral the people who worked in the Palace burned fires all night along the footpath all the way around the Palace as a sign of their respect. Hundreds of people poured into the Palace grounds to be part of the singing and hundreds of others milled in the streets outside - the atmosphere was amazing and the singing spine-tingling. Even as we returned home, people were still walking along the roads towards town to be part of it - it seemed that the whole island was focused on the approaching funeral.

And they were all there the next day! Once again we had the enormous privilege of being able to go to the Palace with the College choir to hear again the continuous singing and to see dozens of foreign dignitaries bringing their wreaths to be placed around the coffin - huge and colourful. Most walked across the lawn from a reception tent, but the Crown Prince of Japan and the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, representing Queen Elizabeth, were driven up in enormous black limousines bearing the colours of their country. It was all an amazing mix of traditional Tongan and European practices. The delivery of wreaths and signing the Visitors' Book took all morning and then at 12 noon the preparations began for the coffin's final journey to the Royal Tombs - a distance of about a kilometre. The huge (and heavy!) casket was removed from the viewing room and placed by hefty soldiers on the huge bier which had been prepared to transport it to its final resting place. Then the pall-bearers took over - literally hundreds of them all dressed in black and traditional mourning dress. 150 students from the College were part of the entourage - the idea

Is that those closest to the coffin should change places often as the load is so heavy, but in reality those bearing the load are reluctant to relinquish it, so the others walk alongside. The procession, led by the Royal mourners and accompanied by the King's Brass Band, included groups of important people (church leaders, relatives, nobles, government officials) - the whole route was laid with tapa cloth - an incredible sight. A 21 gun salute continued during the procession and the Free Wesleyan church bell tolled throughout.

At the tombs, marquees had been erected, the whole of the military was on display, the band played throughout and a choir led the hymn singing. Official guests sat on chairs under the shelters and thousands of others, including us, overflowed from the other chairless tents on to the carefully mowed grass. Traditional elders sat as motionless guardians throughout on the central tomb construction (almost pyramid-like white stone) and the traditional undertaker presided over events from the bier. There was a dominant Christian emphasis throughout the ceremony - we have sung the King's favourite hymn, 'Tell me the Old, Old Story', so often! Various clergy (not only from the King's church) read scripture, prayers and a funeral liturgy; there was a sermon (emotional and loud) and then began the traditional rites: the coffin was removed from the bier to the site of the grave alongside it, various traditional rituals were carried out with movement of mats, ropes, tapa, and then the grave was closed and the whole site covered with sand to create an enormous mound. This took nearly an hour all up (the sand alone!) and the final event concluded after 4.30pm.

It was an amazing and unique experience but I must admit we were glad to catch the first College bus back home after an eight hour day. We were tired, sore and sunburnt, but have a memory which can never be replaced.

Now we are preparing for a celebration of our own - Andrew and Jenny are being married on Sunday 1 October at the historical St Andrew's Church, Ormiston, and we are now preparing to leave for Australia.

It really has been an exciting year - we look forward to the future and wonder what more can happen!

Best Wishes
from

Judy and Alan Morrison

Brownies' Stamp Collection

Please remember, at this time of year when we are all likely to receive a great deal of post, that Elvet Brownies collect stamps for *Guide Dogs for the Blind*. Place your stamps, torn from the envelopes with some paper still round them in the box under the pigeonholes.

Clean aluminium foil is also most acceptable—so wash out your mince pie containers!

Many thanks!

LOST IN WONDER

A new online space, created by the Methodist Church, invites visitors to join a pilgrimage of discovery, freeing the mind from clutter, calming the spirit and strengthening awareness of and openness to God.

Based on an ancient design, www.lostinwonder.org.uk is an online labyrinth that invites visitors on a spiritual journey of encounter and challenge. A labyrinth is a metaphor for the spiritual journey into death and out again into life.

Lost in Wonder has ten interactive 'stations' that can be visited in any order, each with images, a Bible text, a prayer and a guiding voice leading the guest into the theme of that place. Some of the stations reflect on the priorities of the Methodist Church - worship, learning and caring, service and evangelism - while others consider different aspects and expressions of spirituality.

"A labyrinth is an ancient way to journey deeper into God's presence and then to travel out again into God's world . This is a place of change and challenge as well as rest and contemplation. We hope that people will find in it a freedom that helps them to connect with others who want to learn about God's love".

The Revd Michaela Youngson, Methodist Secretary for Pastoral Care and Spirituality

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



CRADLE ROLL BIRTHDAYS

December

- 4th Katie Bell (Bowburn)
- 7th Natasha Aimee Smalley (Bowburn)
- 14th Elissa Charlie Finney (Bowburn)
- 27th Jack Steven Gibson (Bowburn)

- January** 5th Jake Dobinson-Bell(Bowburn)

**JUNIOR CHURCH AND SUNDAY CLUB
BIRTHDAYS**

December

- 1st Oliver Scott (Elvet)
- 3rd Isla Jardine (Elvet)
- 4th Lachlan Jardine (Elvet)
- 7th Annalise Newell (Bowburn)
- 12th Sophie Garnett (Shincliffe)
- 13th Grace Lawson (Elvet)
- 20th Rachel Metcalfe (Bowburn)
- 22nd Alistair Dundee (Elvet)
- 30th Annabell Frewin-Wood

- January** 18th Emmanuel Oni (Elvet)
25th Natasha Collingham (Shincliffe)

A Happy Birthday To You All

Can you sleep while the wind blows?

Years ago an American farmer owned land along the Atlantic seacoast. He constantly advertised for hired hands. Most people were reluctant to work on farms along the coast. They dreaded the raging storms which wreaked havoc on buildings and crops. The farmer interviewed many, but, when they realised where the farm was, everyone refused.

Finally, a short, rather fat man, well past middle age came for interview. The farmer asked, "Are you a good farm hand?" to which the man replied, "Well, I can sleep when the wind blows."

The farmer didn't understand the response, but at least it wasn't a refusal. He hired the man. And the man worked well round the farm, busy from dawn till dusk so that the farmer was very satisfied with him.

Then, one night, the wind howled, blowing in from the sea. The farmer woke, grabbed a lantern and hurried to the hired hand's sleeping quarters. "Get up! You need to tie everything down. A storm is coming."

The farmer had to shake the man firmly to rouse him. To his amazement, the man refused to get up and simply repeated that he could sleep whilst the wind blew.

The furious farmer went outside to do the work alone. He was amazed to find that the haystacks were already covered with tarpaulins, the cows were in the barn and the hens in the henhouse. Doors were barred and windows were shuttered. There was nothing left for him to do.

At last the farmer understood what the hired man had meant when he had said, "I can sleep when the wind blows". The farmer returned to his own bed and slept soundly.

The Moral of the Story

When you are prepared spiritually, mentally and physically, you have nothing left to fear.

THE WEEK IN BOWBURN AND SHINCLIFFE

Sundays	9.30 am	* Sunday Club (Shincliffe)
	10.45 am	Morning Worship (Bowburn)
	5.30 pm	Evening Worship (Bowburn) on some Sundays - see notices
Tuesdays	5.30 pm	* Kid's Club (Bowburn)
Wednesdays	2.00 pm	Women's Fellowship (Bowburn) (1st and 2nd in month only)
	2 - 3 pm	Prayer & Fellowship Meeting (Bowburn), last Weds of month.
Thursdays	9.00 am	* "Drop-in" (Bowburn) * <i>term-time only</i>

THE WEEK AT ELVET

Sun	8.30 a.m.	Second Sunday, Holy Communion
	10.45 a.m.	Morning Service & Junior Church, including Crèche
	6.00 p.m.	Evening Worship
	7.30 p.m.	MethSoc (term-time)
Mon	2.00 p.m.	Prayer Meeting (2nd & 4th Mon)
	5.45 p.m.	Brownies (Open Group) [Girls 7-10]
	6.00 p.m.	Cubs (Open Group) [Boys 8-10½]
	7.30 p.m.	Guides (Open Group) [Girls 10-16] meets at St Giles'
	7.30 p.m.	Explorers (Open Group) [Mixed 14½-18]
	7.45 p.m.	House Group at Newton Hall (alternate weeks)
Tue	10.00 a.m.	City House Group (alternate weeks)
	10.15 a.m.	Halliday Grove House Group (alternate weeks)
	5.30 p.m.	Beavers (Open Group) [Boys 6-8]
	7.15 p.m.	Scouts (Open Group) [Boys 10½-14½]
	8.00 p.m.	House Group at Gilesgate (alternate weeks)
Wed	2.30 p.m.	Women's Fellowship (1st & 3rd weeks)
Thurs	10.00 a.m.	Arts & Crafts Workshop
	7.45 p.m.	Thursday Club for All (alternate weeks)
	7.45 p.m.	House Group at Shincliffe (alternate weeks)

ELVET and BOWBURN METHODIST CHURCHES

Ministers:

Rev Neil Dixon BA MPhil

Tel: 384 8755

and

Rev. Julie Lunn, BA, MA

Tel: 377 8089

DON'T FORGET

Copy for the **February - March**  newsletter
should reach Jackie Fielding  y

28th January

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

by phone on Durham 384 7305

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

Alternatively, those at **Shincliffe** can contact

Jim Harper on Durham 386 4360.

Those at **Bowburn** can contact

Liz Atkinson on Durham 377 0687.