

LIVING WATERS



River Tyne near Corbridge

encouraging enabling challenging
in the Tynedale Methodist Circuit

SPRING 2017

Dear Friends

Welcome to Living Waters!

At the risk of being obvious, there are signs of new life all around us – in countryside, woods and gardens. Maybe there's new life in your family, or you've got a fresh lease of life yourself.



Perhaps there's also new life in your church, with people finding or growing in faith. As Easter approaches we give thanks for God's resurrection power at work in us (Ephesians 1:19).

Some of us may feel we're still in the dark, cold depths of winter. If that's you, take heart: the resurrection is about hope for the future and confidence that though we struggle and suffer, God will ultimately prevail; after the winter comes spring.

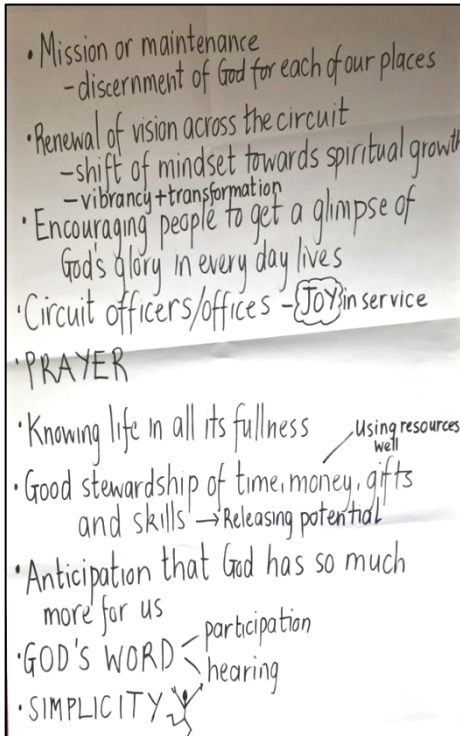
I know many in Tynedale will agree that God is doing something special here. In renewing individuals, families, communities and churches, God is touching lives with grace and wants to touch so many more. We're trying to describe this and co-operate with God by producing a new Mission strategy. My hope is that we will be flexible and faithful enough to respond to what God is doing so that we will be led step by step by the Spirit of God. Please pray that we will be!

Recently I was struck by Hosea chapter 14. In the eighth century BC, Israel had been a wealthy, powerful nation. But they had turned from God to paganism and they had oppressed the poor and the vulnerable. In the end they were invaded and destroyed by Assyria. In place of a harvest they found only weeds. Their farms, villages and towns were laid waste.

This all happened, the prophets said, because people had looked to their kings, to alliances with foreign countries, to their wealth, to politicians and to idols to save them.

They had looked to everything and everyone but God. Yet in Hosea 14, God promised that if the people turned back to God sincerely, he would refresh them and 'be like the dew to Israel' (v.5).

We must not put our trust just in strategies or programmes or experts - though they have their place. We must look to God and depend on God as much as we depend on the air we breathe.



Hopes and dreams from the Ministers' retreat last September

Ultimately, only through God will refreshment and new life come.

For this reason the Circuit has launched '**Growing in Prayer**', encouraging and enabling folk to pray, together and alone, for God's grace to flood us with new life, 'like the dew'.

You'll be hearing more about that in the coming days and weeks, so keep your eyes and ears open!

Lasting, healthy growth will be achieved only by the grace of God. So do join me in praying that God will increasingly touch individuals, families, communities and churches.

Please pray also that we will welcome God's gracious touch –

not everyone does! And please consider how, with others, you can take part in this raising of prayer and 'return to the Lord your God' (Hosea 14:1).

God bless!

Rev Paul

The egg that shares the Easter story

The new look Real Easter Egg 2017 range has been launched and churches are being asked to encourage people to support this unique way of sharing the story of Easter.



This year a 24 page Easter story-activity book illustrated by Alida Massari is included in the Original, Egg Hunt and Dark eggs. The Special Edition has an Easter traditions booklet inside. The Sharing box, with 30 eggs, comes with colour-in posters.

Out of the 80 million Easter eggs sold in this part of the world every year, The Real Easter Egg is the only one which has a copy of the Easter story in the box, is made of Fairtrade chocolate and makes a donation to charity from sales.

The Real Easter Egg was launched in 2010 but the supermarkets turned down the idea. It was left to churches and church schools to place orders to fund The Meaningful Chocolate Company to make The Real Easter Egg. To date, more than one million eggs have been sold with 750,000 of these sent through the post directly to churches and schools. The rest have been sold through independent retailers and supermarkets.

The success of The Real Easter Egg has meant that the production of Fairtrade chocolate has moved to the UK. Over £250,000 has been raised from sales for charitable causes.

Where to buy

The whole range can be ordered online at www.realeasteregg.co.uk or from Traidcraft, Eden.co.uk, TLM trading.com, Embrace the Middle East. Christian bookshops and some cathedrals also have stock or more locally the Tradecraft stall at Hexham Trinity.

You can also buy the blue Original egg from Tesco, Waitrose, Morrisons. See the full shop list or order at www.realeasteregg.co.uk

EASTER – new life in Jesus Christ



Easter Crosses will be on display at Bellingham, Falstone, Fourstones and Haydon Bridge chapels.

Hexham Churches Together:

Good Friday Walk of Witness –

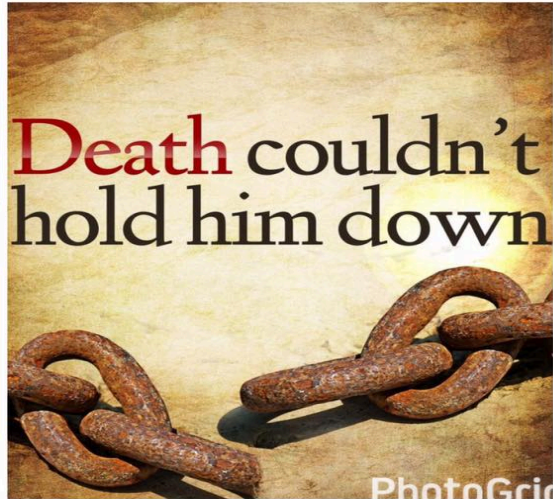
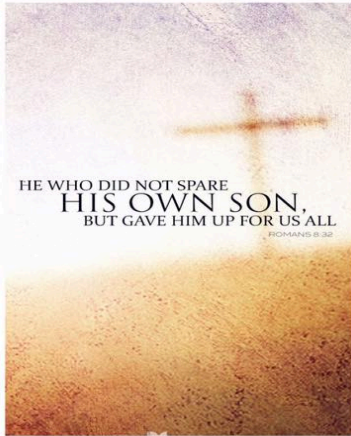
10.30am from Maidens Walk to the Sele

Easter Sunrise service: on the Sele at 6am.

Allen Valleys:

United Maundy Thursday service – Sparty Lea; 2.30pm

United Good Friday service – Allendale; 10am



Saturday men's breakfasts:

These are ecumenical monthly meetings held at Vallum Farm, on the Military Road, organised by Donald Curry, Max Philbrick and Jonathan Fawdry. Meetings run from September to April/May and are always well supported. Over the course of the 4 years or so that I have been attending, the speakers have been many and varied, such as:-

- a non-denominational prison visitor
- a funeral director,
- someone who set up a home for street children in Kenya.

Their stories are all different, but a recurrent theme running through all of them is Christian love for others and a yearning to follow the teachings of our Saviour Jesus Christ that we aid and that we serve one another.

Neil Mallon – Hexham Trinity



Perspectives: Tyne Valley **Christian Vision for Men**

**Our mission is to help men
develop their spiritual potential.**

What do we do?

We meet on Saturday mornings - usually the last in the month - from September to November, and January to April, from 8.30 to 10am, over a good breakfast at Vallum Farm Tea Room, on the Military Road (B6318) about 5 miles north-east of Corbridge. We enjoy informal conversation and then listen to an interesting speaker, with opportunity for questions. We want to build friendships between men from varying church backgrounds - and none - from across Tynedale. We want to share faith, ideas and life experiences; to be mutually encouraging and enable all to grow spiritually.

Please come along!

Speakers coming soon:

25th March: Jonathan Lamb - Weakness and Power

29th April: Larry Bush - Changing the world one bite at a time

<http://perspectivescvfm.btck.co.uk>

Tynedale MWiB

Jane Dixon, Hexham West End.

Whether or not you are more familiar with the names Women's Work, Women's Fellowship, or Network (Women's Network in the Methodist Church), the umbrella name all our women's groups in the Methodist Church come under today is **MWiB (Methodist Women in Britain)**. Here in Tynedale Circuit our MWiB is headed up by President Deacon Anne Taylor, ably assisted by Secretary Joan Appleby.

In October, Prudhoe Methodist Church member Helen Taylor spoke of her experience as our Newcastle District MWiB rep to the World Federation of Methodist & Uniting Church Women. (MWiB is part of the larger umbrella of WFMUCW). The 13th World Assembly (every 5 years) was in Houston USA, attended by over 800 women from around the globe.

65 Tynedale people attended a Chinese Banquet at the Golden Dragon Restaurant Hexham in May, to raise money for Helen's trip (£1482), which Helen then donated to enable women in Eastern Europe, who otherwise could not have afforded the trip, to go.



Lynne Graham Helen Taylor

Jane Dixon

In October Helen described three workshops she attended:

- Hospitality (not tea and cakes at events, but radical, like welcoming immigrants and refugees),
- Healing (not just our physical and mental ailments, but our whole wellbeing, so spiritual as well), and
- Hymns (more than just great tunes, but words of Scripture taught to and etched in our memories).

I missed Helen's talk at West End because I was attending the District MWiB retreat at Minsteracres for three days led by past President of Methodist Conference Rev Ruth Gee from Darlington District – the joy and exuberance in singing and dancing at closing worship with Holy Communion was a fitting end to our discussions and deliberations on Isaiah's commissioning – considering eyes, feet and wings!

A bigger gathering of around 250 ladies takes place every April at the Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick, Derbyshire for the Connexional MWiB President of Methodist Conference Dr Jill Barber, the highlight being the traditional Methodist Love Feast which we shared around 25 tables each testifying to our encounters of closeness and thankfulness to God, that weekend.

District MWiB has its own programme of retreats, services and dinners – World Church Day was held at Brunswick Methodist Church last June; District Dinner was held at Newbiggin Methodist Church last July; Re-Dedication of District Officers was held at Wesley Memorial Methodist Church Low Fell last November when President Elect Gillian Patton said of all the 'F's' – **food, fun, fellowship, family, friends, forgetting** – it is **faith** that has to come first before fund raising; Chair of District Rev. Stephen Lindridge preached that we need faith as a mustard seed: resilient, robust and remarkable; President Rev Judith Oldroyd presented a cheque for £16,000 raised by women in our District last year, for an expensive piece of breast cancer screening equipment, and announced this year's fund raising is to be for All Hands in Nepal, rebuilding schools following the earthquake two years ago.

By the time this Living Waters is distributed, ladies of various Methodist Churches around Tynedale will have attended a day led by Joan Appleby, who, as one of our first Presidents and a tremendous support for all future Presidents, and has been instrumental in Circuit Network and MWiB, since 2001, when Haltwhistle, Hexham and Allendale Circuits united as Tynedale Circuit. The ladies of Catton Methodist Church will have generously provided a two-course lunch for all attendees on that day. The Easter Offering Dedication Service will take place at Haydon Bridge Methodist Church in April with speaker Rev Mary Elliot. Money from Easter Offering envelopes is used to support mission projects in our 65 Methodist partner countries around the world. There is a summer social event being planned for June.

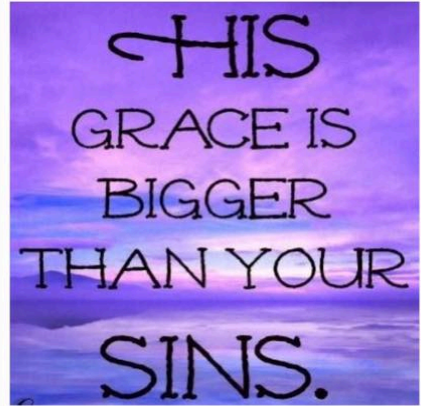
A Regional MWiB event for ladies from Cumbria, Darlington, Newcastle, Scotland and Shetland Districts (held every 2 years) is being hosted by Cumbria District at Rydal Hall, Ambleside for 4 days in July

But the real grass roots level of MWiB is in our own churches, where ladies meet (weekly, fortnightly or monthly during the week for fellowship, growth, encouragement; and usually invite a speaker.

Last year I was privileged to be invited to industrious groups of ladies in our Circuit at Stocksfield, Prudhoe, Haltwhistle and Wylam Methodist Churches as speaker. I recognise God's blessing, anointing, light and presence on these ladies who gather regularly and indeed colonise our world with the Kingdom of God, heaven on earth right now. They demonstrate the nature and attributes of God, loving and caring pastorally for one another, quietly making a difference in their communities with food banks, support to women's refuges, and further afield in Palestine and other troubled areas.

Well done, ladies of the Methodist Church and long may we meet, to both come to know and make Christ known.

Jane Dixon, West End.



KNOWING THAT YOU ARE
COMPLETELY FORGIVEN
DESTROYS THE POWER OF
SIN IN YOUR LIFE.

These sentences actually appeared in church bulletins
or were announced in church services:

[The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.](#)

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of
those things not worth keeping around the house.

Bring your husbands.

For those of you who have children and don't know it,
we have a nursery downstairs.

Sunday Schools

Jenny Shrimpton

A while ago I spent an afternoon with the Wylam Methodist Women in Britain; we talked about Sunday Schools past and present. As I scrolled through my PowerPoint we began our time looking at Robert Raikes' Sunday Schools of the 18th Century. Of course we were quick to mention Raikes' connection with John Wesley, who reportedly stayed at the home of the famous philanthropist some time after 1783.



Robert Raikes, founder of Sunday School

In Robert Raikes' time no-one could deny the impact Sunday Schools had on transforming society. On one day a week the poorest children were given the opportunity to receive a basic education, using the Bible as a textbook. Not only were children taught to read and write but they were given boundaries, praise and encouragement. The striking effect these Sunday lessons had on the behaviour of the young attendees was even marvelled at by Queen Charlotte.

It's apparent that over the years the social and educational needs of children have been met elsewhere. Just over 100 years after Raikes' first Sunday Schools, the Education Act of 1870 meant that education became available for all children. Today children are presented with a vast array of opportunities to play and socialise.

However, what I hadn't counted on that afternoon, was hearing so many wonderful stories about the large vibrant Sunday schools of the 1940s and 50s. The ladies I had been asked to speak to taught me about the Sunday Schools they had attended as young girls. Sunday Schools of the 30s, 40s, and 50s sounded like enormous fun. The Wylam ladies told me with enthusiasm and fondness, numerous stories from their Sunday School days. It was evident that during this period Sunday Schools had played an important part in providing social activities for young people - opportunities to gather together with friends, day trips out, presentations, shows, sporting events, competitions and holidays.

Entertainment is, as we know, accessible through many different forms of media, which means (in theory) young people are rarely bored. It is also true to say that in many areas, local sports clubs and school facilities help to keep children fit and active, while interclub sports promote a healthy attitude to competitiveness and team work.

We might be tempted to think that, in light of these changes, the role of our Sunday Schools have changed beyond recognition. But there is one role that has been unceasingly embraced by Sunday School teachers since the first 'schools' opened their doors in the 1780s, and remains the primary aim of most Sunday Schools across the country – namely, teaching children about the Bible.

The value of teaching children the Bible is widely recognised by Christians. It is broadly accepted that, just as an adult's relationship with God is strengthened through knowledge of the scriptures, so is a child's, and towards the end of my time with the ladies in Wylam I talked about the Bible teaching material I write for Sunday Schools.

I described my passion for teaching Bible stories chronologically so that children see how God has been at work from Genesis to Revelation. I showed the group the flashcards we've created to give children an overview of the Bible and help them see how individual Bible stories fit together. We briefly looked at how, even as adults, we quickly forget the order in which things happened - did Naaman wash in the river Jordan before or after Daniel was thrown to the lions?

Since my time in Wylam I've been asked to talk with a number of groups about teaching the Bible to children. One of the questions I'm often asked is 'How can we make Bible teaching engaging for children?' In response to this question I find group discussions helpful. On several occasions, when teams have shared ideas of what works well in various settings, such conversations have inspired creative problem solving and been a source of encouragement for those facing particular difficulties.

In conclusion, looking at Sunday Schools over the years is both enjoyable and fascinating. Although much has changed over the decades, Bible teaching for children has been the golden thread running through the various styles and programmes of the Sunday School movement.

Today there doesn't seem to be one approach that solves all issues facing Sunday Schools. My observations are that there are many sources of encouragement, a great deal of good resources and a wealth of experience we can draw on as we prepare our sessions and continue in the great tradition of teaching children on Sundays.

Jenny Shrimpton, writer of The Bible Curriculum.

For more information visit **www.thebiblecurriculum.com**

At Catton we have been regularly catering for over 12 years, since the Chapel refurbishment in 2004, when our kitchen was upgraded to meet catering specifications. We also purchased a double oven and more recently a commercial dishwasher. Since 2004 we have held a monthly community lunch open to people of all ages. The catering team also take bookings for groups e.g. away days, training, birthday parties and have held one-off events such as a Mediterranean evening for 50 people. These activities form part of Catton's outreach programme.



Community lunches are on the first Thursday of every month and served at 12.30pm. The meals are cooked on the premises with locally sourced ingredients and although it is a set menu we can cater for special needs e.g. vegetarian or gluten free.

Our regular folks plus visitors and holiday makers are always welcome. The charge is £6 for a main course and pudding plus tea/coffee.

If you are planning a drive out in the Allen valleys why not book your lunch 1-2 days ahead by ringing – Ann : 01434 683050 (email annpotter82@gmail.com) or Monica 01434 683437.



Tynedale

Methodist Circuit

Bellingham, Barrasford,
Falstone, Kielder, Wark
Fourstones with Warden,
Haydon Bridge

Deacon Anne Taylor

Hexham Trinity
Slaley
Rev. David Goodall

Hexham West End
Acomb, Langley
Rev. Paul Dunstan

Corbridge,
Riding Mill, Wylam
Rev. Jane Cook

Allendale, Catton
Haltwhistle
Keenley, Sparty Lea
Rev. Alex Dunstan

Prudhoe
Mickley
Stocksfield
Rev. Jenny Pryde

www.tynedalemethcircuit.org

Local church details:

Living Waters is co-ordinated by Sandra Martin and Team for Tynedale Circuit.
If you have any comments / suggestions / contributions / ideas / photos
please send to **Sandra Martin, Glen View, Fourstones, Hexham NE47 5DT** or
email: sandramartin_19@hotmail.com **before 27th April please.**