

LIVING WATERS



Rainbow over the Tyne at Farnley Haugh towards Corbridge

Encouraging Enabling Challenging
in the Tynedale Methodist Circuit

SPRING 2018

Welcome to our spring edition of Living Waters.

It was lovely to hear about 'Open the Book' in the last edition of Living waters and we are hoping to start one in Wark soon.

I was reminded how important it is to tell the Christian story and even the Christmas story. When meeting with the youth 'Drop In' at Falstone for their Christmas party, there were 9 young people on this occasion aged between 9-14 ish, although the boys are taller than me now. Being very competitive we gave prizes for the winner of each game and even prizes for taking part. At supper time whilst enjoying pizzas, sausage rolls, crisps, cakes and drinks I thought I would tell them the Christmas story using M&Ms, an idea pinched from Messy Church magazine. For those who don't know what M&Ms are, they are a bit like smarties with an 'M' in the middle. You can turn it round to make an 'E' for east, 'M' for Mary, mother, manger etc. Then '3' for the three gifts and 'W' for worship. Any attempt at the story was awarded with M&Ms. This went down very well with most of the group but my biggest surprise was that one of them said '*I don't know this story*' to which another of them said '*yes you do it's that play we do at Christmas.*' The one who didn't know the story suggested it was perhaps because of the school he went to.

I don't remember which school it was, but how sad and disturbing for us that in this day and age of multi-media a 14 year old didn't know the story!

I hope this encourages you to get involved with a Holiday Club, Open the Book or Kid's Clubs so that every young person gets to know the story of Jesus, Gods Son, our Lord and Saviour.

It reminds me of the words from that hymn H&P 770 verse 2
'Go forth and tell God's love embraces all. He will in grace respond to all who call. How shall they call if they have never heard the gracious invitation of his word?'

Deacon Anne Taylor

Front cover picture courtesy of Network Rail



UPDATES

Haltwhistle - Good news travels fast. The OTB team have had invitations from Greenhead and Henshaw Schools to take OTB into these places, as well as Haltwhistle's First School.

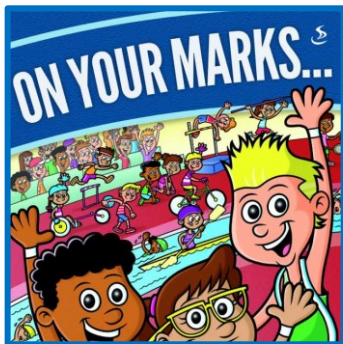
Henshaw held an 'RE Day' on 5th. February with all sorts of activities to promote the themes of Hope, Friendship and Respect. The team from Haltwhistle Chapel took the story of Zacchaeus into the school to tell of the love of Jesus.

Exciting times in Haltwhistle and the surrounding villages!

Congratulations – to Alison Clark, Trinity and West End's children's worker who was appointed as the Bible Society's Open the Book National Training and Development Manager. She started her new job at the beginning of January. Your prayers for safe travelling would be welcome as her duties cover the whole of the UK.

HOLIDAY CLUBS PRUDHOE AND STOCKSFIELD

Historically we have always had a Holiday Club in the summer, and this summer we are looking to run this in conjunction with the Baptist and Parish Churches of Stocksfield who run a Club in the same week. This will allow us to support each other and offer a united Christian witness to families in the area.



The younger children will come to Prudhoe Methodist, the older ones will go to Stocksfield Baptist and it will run as a two centre, ecumenically run mission which we are delighted about.

We are planning to use a Scripture Union Sports themed Holiday Club resource

Anyone interested in being involved contact Rev. Jenny Porterpryde



Hexham Holiday Club
is in its 48th year!

The main mission takes place in the first week of the school summer holidays and is run by a huge team of volunteers - mostly from churches in Hexham. Each day we meet together at 10am at the bandstand, after which the children enjoy two hours of fun at various age-group venues around the town. This includes groups from Parent/Baby age, right through to Year 7s. In addition to all this, the Year 8-13s have a separate evening programme of events during the week, called 'Nightshift'.

This year's theme is 'Teambuilders' (a Scripture Union programme), running from 22nd.-29th.July including the Sunday services. We would love more people to experience being a volunteer on our amazing team. Not only do we have people working directly with the children and young people, but also a vast array of support team members to help ensure everything runs smoothly - whatever your strengths, we are likely to have a place for you to serve!

We are also developing for children and their families through the year, such as a BBQ, 'All Hallow's Eve' activities and a Pancake Party. These are supported by some of our fab team too.

We are very proud of how Hexham Holiday Club has evolved over the years and look forward with excitement to where God takes us in the future!

Please visit our website for more information
hexhamtrinity.org.uk/holidayclub

Do contact us directly with any queries – admin@hexhamholidayclub.org.uk

Tim Belton & Niky Dodds (HHC Team Leaders)

Haltwhistle and Allen Valley Section

Mission-Bites - Glimpses of God!

Haltwhistle Breakfast Worship

Breakfast Worship takes place once a month at 9am on a Wednesday morning. It is a mission opportunity to give people an alternative time and form of worshipping to what they might be used to. The small hall is set up 'cafe style' and worship starts with bacon sandwiches, fresh fruit, tea and coffee and discussion around the theme for the worship. There is a Bible passage and a short 'Word' followed by more discussion, feedback and prayers. It is usually accompanied by quite a lot of laughter, but sends people away thinking!

Sinderhope High Forest Praise

As a mission enterprise, Sparty Lea Chapel, led by Joyce Short and a very willing team, hold worship and share food at High Forest Community Centre, Sinderhope at least once a quarter. It is a time when folks worship God in an informal setting, with hymns, readings, prayers and a short Word, followed by sharing food. Sparty Lea members host this event and prepare the food. All the Allen Valley Chapels are well represented and very much enjoy worshipping and eating together. It is also important for those in a rural community who do not regularly attend chapel, to find a space to worship God where they feel comfortable to do so, and many do.

Catton Coffee & Chat – next to be held 10th. March

Catton Chapel held their first Coffee & Chat event on Saturday 20th January. This came about after one of the members felt that God was very much speaking about **'Invitation'**. The Chapel was changed into a Cafe Style area and hot drinks and home-made tray bakes prepared. The congregation were asked to invite a friend to the event, where Stephanie from the Cedar Tree Book Shop gave a very moving Testimony about how Jesus had worked in her life in the past and was still doing so now. It was a great witness and a glimpse of God's glory which sparked much conversation and many questions. More Coffee and Chat Events with various people giving testimony are in the pipeline. Do speak to Elizabeth Archer for more information.

God is good and offers us all daily glimpses of his glory!

FOCUS ON.....PRUDHOE



Hello! It is great to have the opportunity to tell you a little about life at Prudhoe Methodist Church. Our church building is set in the heart of Prudhoe on the front street and we meet every Sunday at 10 am to share worship together.

We are very grateful for our lovely team of stewards, worship leaders and musicians who work very hard to arrange and support worship for our 80+ members.

We have a small, devoted group who meet for morning prayers every weekday and on Friday mornings they join with members and clergy from churches all over Prudhoe. We share information about our church activities and support one another in prayer for each other and for the circuit.

Once a month we run our 'Soup and Sweet' Lunch Club. This is organised by our keen team of 'Soup Dragon' ladies and our wash up team which consists of several of the men of the church. We often ask for prayer requests from our Lunch Club visitors which they write in a book for our Morning Prayer team to read.



Tuesdays and Thursdays are our Toddler group days which are well attended by parents, grandparents and child minders and we are grateful to all the volunteers who help.



The first Friday of the month is our Messy Church evening when we seek to welcome and worship with young families from the town. We are very ably helped in this by our Youth Worker Ruth Lindridge.

Recently a group of our members have begun a 'Good Book Club' using resources from The Bible Society and some of our members, helped by Ruth, run a Junior Youth Club on Friday evenings where the children learn about faith through craft and games.



On Tuesdays, a group of Christians from across the town's ecumenical community meet for Ignite.

This is a national discipleship and discernment course which is now in its second year. We work in tandem with the Pioneer Network of free churches and feel very blessed to be part of this programme.

Thanks to the support of the circuit and of our own members, we have been able to redecorate and update much of our building in recent years. This enables us to continue to welcome a wide range of community and church groups into the building.

As with the rest of the circuit, we are conscious of the need to look to our 'Growth Plan' over the next year. We will aim for growth by moving our Messy Church times, running some 'Life Skills' workshops to attract older teenagers and seek to provide more time in retreat and rest through our 'Soul Spa' craft and prayer events.

We value your prayers and remember you in ours.
Rev Jenny Porterpryde





How welcoming is your church?

Of course all of you are saying “oh yes, ours is a very friendly church. Visitors are always welcome here.” Have you ever been to another church and experienced the variety of responses there can be?

Attending services at other churches due to being elsewhere on business, holiday or just having a day away, the writer has known a wide variety of 'welcomes'.

These have ranged from people almost queueing up to shake hands and make you feel at home, to being completely ignored by everyone apart, perhaps, from an audible whisper of “who's that over there?” and the reply “dunno, never seen them before”.

A visitor may come to church for any number of reasons. They may be on holiday or on business in the area. Equally, something may have drawn them there for any number of reasons – a recent bereavement, a crisis of some kind in life, a feeling that there must be something more to life than they have experienced already or just a sudden unexplainable need for being in a peaceful surrounding. So what does the visitor experience when they arrive at your church?

Assuming that the church has an up-to-date notice board giving the times of services it begins with probably one of the most undervalued roles in the church – door stewards. In some places they are rightly referred to as 'welcomers', which is how it should be. Sadly, in some places there is no-one at the door and the visitor is left to pick up a hymn book and find their own way into the building. Not a promising start and obviously a church that is not expecting any new faces.

Or the door steward can be deep in conversation with a 'regular', give a cursory nod of acknowledgement, thrust a hymn book into the visitor's hand and then get back to the important matter of hearing about the regular attender's latest ailment, holiday or whatever.

A brief word of welcome together with some information (eg “we serve coffee after the service – hope you can stay”, “there is a creche/Sunday Club/loop system” etc etc)

When a visitor gets inside the church and sits down, what happens next? Before the service isn't the time for lengthy conversation but a nod and smile from the person nearest is always an indication that this could be a church that actually **does** care about people – remember, it takes fewer muscles to smile than to frown and even the ugliest of us look better when we do smile. The same applies when the service closes – a friendly handshake (remember to smile!) and a gentle enquiry along the lines of “are you visiting or do you live nearby?” is a real welcome from a church that cares. The visitor may be just as shy as you, so make the effort. At the same time, don't interrogate and start asking why they are here, where are they from, are they a believer etc. Try to let some of these things gently flow into conversation. If there is coffee after the service, this is an ideal time for talking to the visitor and let your usual 'clique' do without you for once. Letting a visitor sit in splendid isolation at coffee time, whilst everyone else is chatting in groups, is a very uncomfortable experience – I know, I've been there.

So then, how welcoming is your church? How welcoming were *you* when the visitor came? Never mind the excuses (“I was so busy gathering up the hymn books/tidying up after Kids Club/making sure old Mrs Bloggs had a lift home/anyway, that's the church steward's job” or all the other pressing reasons for not saying “hello” to the stranger). What was your church's score out of ten when you sat and thought about it? If you really want to know how some visitors are welcomed, try going to a church you haven't visited before and experience first-hand what it feels like to be welcomed - or to be totally ignored! It might make you think.

From a frequent visitor to different churches.

CREATING A CULTURE OF INVITATION - This free training event takes place on Tuesday 20th March, 10.00am - 1.00pm at Chester-le-Street Methodist Church. It fits well with the circuit's current theme of "Moving into the Neighbourhood". <https://greatcommission.co.uk/invitation>.

Interested persons/groups please book with Elaine Lindridge, District Evangelism Enabler; elaine@lindridge.org.uk 07734 904475

PROFILE



George Charlton Circuit Property Secretary

I was greeted by the cheerful words “I always think being Property Secretary is the worst possible job in the circuit”. This from a much loved and respected supernumerary minister (who shall remain nameless) when I told him that I had volunteered for this role.

I admit that there are many aspects of the job which are not exactly exciting but I know that I’d rather do what I do than, for example, wrestle with the finances of a circuit, covering such a huge area. So, in my opinion, the worst job it is not.

The guidance notes I was given on taking up the role were somewhat basic and simply listed two tasks. Firstly the commissioning and distribution of quinquennial inspections and secondly the issue and co-ordination of property schedules. This followed by the input of data onto the Methodist web site and then reporting to circuit meetings. Both of these jobs are quite straightforward as I receive much help in chivvying people from Kathleen our Circuit Administrator.

However, the guidance notes singularly failed to mention the one job which is not quite so straightforward. The occasionally dispiriting, frequently annoying and usually protracted job of assisting in the disposal of properties for which, sadly, the circuit has no further use. It is always upsetting to see a place of worship or manse become redundant however I try to remain positive and always hope that the building, for that is all a property is at the end of the day, will provide someone with a much needed home, a place to work or, as is sometimes the case, a place of worship for a different congregation.

The fact that the Methodist Church is a charity means all property transactions are strictly regulated and we are duty bound to make the most we can from any sale.

This can complicate the already convoluted legal process which surrounds the buying and selling of any property, however I have always found that the advice from the district and central offices is usually prompt and always helpful.

This role suits me, having been involved in the building and property market for most of my working life, and one which I find satisfaction in service to the Methodist Church. Although a Christian organisation, there is still the need for administrators who feel they can serve our Lord best in a more practical way.

LIVING WATER

In Israel, a land that frequently experienced drought, people were keenly aware of water sources and water quality. Springs and rivers that ran all year were few, so the land relied on cisterns to catch and store the winter rains and wells to tap underground water tables. In Jewish culture, 'Dead Water' referred to standing and stored water. 'Living Water' referred to moving water, as in rivers, springs and rainfall. Such water was precious because it was fresh.

The distinction between 'dead' and 'living' water explains why the woman of Samaria was so perplexed when Jesus offered her living water. Samaria had no river. If Jacob had to dig a well there, how could Jesus offer superior water?

NLT Study Bible. John 4: 10-14

Not only are we blessed with so much 'Living Water' in the area in which we live, but we also have the opportunity to share the Living Water that Jesus offers to all. How many have been able to take advantage of the circuit Lent course 'Moving into the Neighbourhood' and learning how we can do this?

DECEMBER TYNE DALE CIRCUIT MEETING 7th December 2017

Youth Work in Hexham

Tara Barrick and Alison Clark gave a brief account along with visual aids of the work they are doing in our Churches in Hexham and with Boys Brigade which has been supported by the Circuit Meeting.

Circuit Assessment Circuit Treasurer David Kilner

The meeting agreed a new way for churches to contribute to the running costs of the Circuit, which will now be based on the income of the churches rather than the number of members or people attending them.

Lent Groups 2018 Rev. David Goodall

David explained and invited people to 'Moving into the Neighbourhood' which would be run as house groups in various areas, giving members a chance to meet others from across the Circuit.

Slaley Chapel Rev. David Goodall

David wished to thank everyone who has supported the last service held at Slaley Chapel which had been a real time of celebration, members of Slaley Chapel are now joining with the congregation of St. Mary's Church for worship.

Mickley Chapel Rev. Jenny Porterpryde

Members of Mickley Chapel have reached that difficult time where they feel they need to request to cease to meet. Jenny praised the work of the small group of faithful members who have worked extremely hard to keep a witness in Mickley over the years. The meeting approved this request, the last service will be held on Palm Sunday 25th March at 6.00 pm and will be led by Rev. Jenny Porterpryde.

New Circuit Connexional Funds Treasurer needed

Present Connexional Funds Treasurer Brian Elstob wishes to stand down but is happy to mentor someone in the role. Anyone wishing to be considered, please contact the Superintendent.

The next Circuit Meeting will be held on **Thursday 22nd March 2018** 7.30 pm at Fourstones with Warden Methodist Church

Ordained ministry in Tynedale Circuit

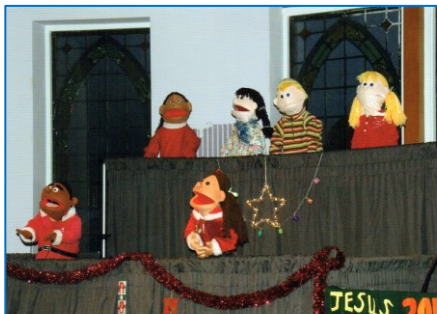
You will be aware that the Rev. Jane Cook will be leaving Tynedale Circuit in August 2018 to take up an appointment in Sunderland. We shall say our 'thank you's and 'goodbyes' to Jane in due course.

After much prayerful deliberation and consultation we have invited the Rev. Marie Beard to serve half-time in the Circuit for 2 years from 1 September 2018, and she has accepted. Marie will have pastoral charge of Corbridge and Riding Mill churches and will share pastoral charge of Stocksfield with the Rev. Jenny Porterpryde. Wylam will come under the pastoral charge of the Rev. Jenny Porterpryde, who will continue also to have pastoral charge of Prudhoe and share pastoral charge of Stocksfield.

This will leave us with resources to employ another half-time member of staff, lay or ordained. We have made no decision on the use of those resources yet but will keep matters under review and hold them in reserve until we have a clear sense of how best to use them in God's service.

We praise God for his provision for us and his guidance and inspiration. We ask you to continue praying for renewal in our Circuit, and for the churches and people most directly affected by these changes. Please pray also for the Methodist Church in our nation, that we might make new disciples who will grow into maturity in their God-given ministry, wherever that may be.

Paul Dunstan, Circuit Superintendent
Sandra Martin, Senior Circuit Steward



In December **Haydon Bridge** held a Puppet Show which was run by the very talented Bell Family singing a selection of lively Christmas songs.

Lots of families came to see the puppets, there were over 60 people in our building that afternoon.

Trinity Prayer Shawl Ministry

In September last year members of the group began planning their Christmas project. A knitted Christmas tree!

The idea of the project came from a leaflet picked up in Woolleyback, the wool shop in Stanhope, requesting knitters in the village to take part in Stanhope Methodist Church's Christmas decoration 2016.

A 12 ft. knitted tree!

This piece of paper floated around in my notebook for months while ideas formed in my head. Eventually I did liaise with a lady in Stanhope who was happy for us to use the idea.

The plan was for everyone to knit 6" squares with shades of green yarn, which would be attached to a 6 or 7 ft frame!!!; decorated, then displayed throughout Advent with an Advent Ring and a poem telling the meaning of the candles in our rear entrance hall to welcome members and visitors. Folk would be reminded of the reason for the season as Christmas approached.



The squares of many hues, patterns (and sizes!) came in thick and fast, helped by inspired members of the congregation reaching 200+ before construction took place.

The frame which had been designed by John McArdle, soon disappeared under a cloak of green, enhanced with miniature knitted Christmas stockings, and multi coloured pom-poms. HT3 (our school years 5-6 youth group) added natural decorations of cones and seed heads to add sparkle and glitter to the scene.

(It was also on display at the church main entrance in Beaumont Street over the weekend of the Hexham markets where free coffee, mulled juice, cookies and sweets were offered to shoppers.)

Many complimentary comments were made as people were seen admiring the effort that had been made to produce it and hopefully noting the Advent message alongside it.

That is not the end of the story, to complete the project the squares are now being stitched into pram or knee rugs and sent to refugees or homeless people in the area, blessed with love, joy and hope.

The ecumenical Prayer Shawl Ministry Group continues meeting weekly at Trinity. Through 2017 - 96 shawls, scarves, pram rugs, knee rugs and kiddies' hats were requested, made with prayerful hands, and then blessed in church before being delivered.

The Thank you cards which we receive are so moving as folk express how God's love is experienced in the receiving and wearing of the garments. What a privilege to carry everything to God in Prayer.

Pam Norton



Tynedale
Methodist Circuit

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

Deacon Anne Taylor

Hexham Trinity
with Slaley

Rev. David Goodall

Hexham West End
Acomb

Rev. Paul Dunstan

Corbridge,
Riding Mill, Wylam

Rev. Jane Cook

Allendale, Catton
Haltwhistle

Keenley, Sparty Lea

Rev. Alex Dunstan

Prudhoe
Mickley

Stocksfield

Rev. Jenny Porterpryde

www.tynedalemethcircuit.org

Local church details:

Living Waters is co-ordinated by John Martin & Team for Tynedale Circuit. If you have any comments / suggestions / contributions / ideas / photos for the Summer edition, please send to: -

John Martin, Glen View, Fourstones, Hexham NE47 5DT
email: john_martin_sb@yahoo.co.uk

By Friday 27th April please.