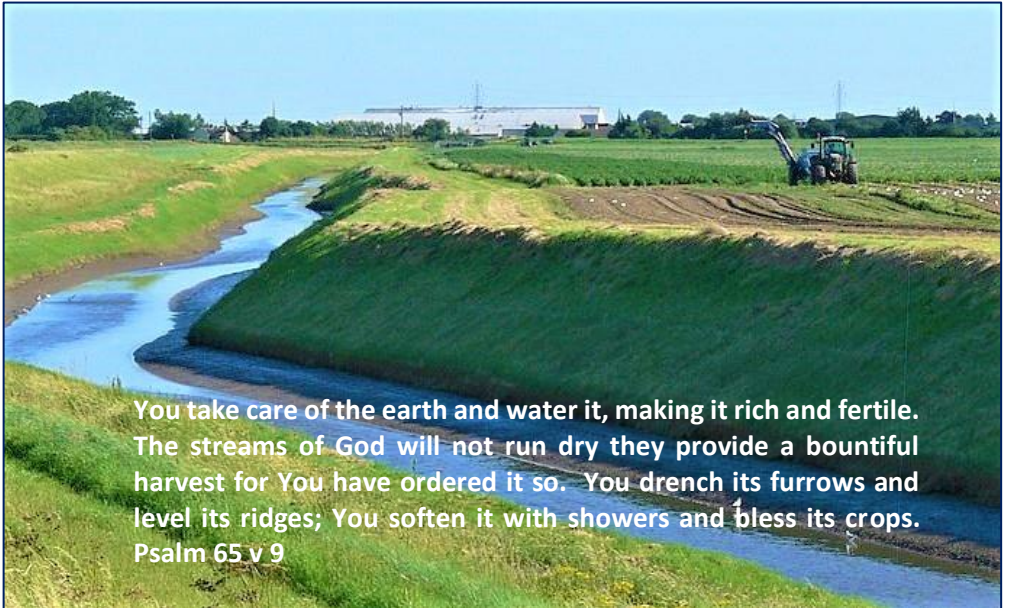


LIVING WATERS



You take care of the earth and water it, making it rich and fertile.
The streams of God will not run dry they provide a bountiful
harvest for You have ordered it so. You drench its furrows and
level its ridges; You soften it with showers and bless its crops.
Psalm 65 v 9

Encouraging Enabling Challenging
in the Tynedale Methodist Circuit

AUTUMN 2023

Dear Friends,

As we begin a new connexional year, it is my privilege to serve you as Superintendent Minister. I come to the role appreciating that this is another year of change for us all. Changes in staffing for the Circuit, changes of minister for some as well as the wider ongoing changes in our world and our communities. Change is by its nature unsettling and we can feel uncertain of who we are and what our role might be in the new circumstance. The fact that change is the only constant in our world (a phrase I've used with my family frequently over the past few months) perhaps isn't all that reassuring.

We speak of God as being our constant, the same yesterday, today and forever, but if we are to hold together the truth of an unchanging Creator and an ever-changing creation then surely it must follow that our God, while consistent in love, grace and mercy, is also dynamic. Jesus speaks of offering us the peace that the world cannot give which includes an assurance of the consistent presence of God to overcome all ills and all evil, while the images we have of the Holy Spirit offer us life giving power, wind and fire, both of which bring about transformation, though it isn't always comfortable.

With all of this in mind, I encourage you consider the headline theme for our connexional year as set by the new President and Vice-President of Conference, Revd Gill Newton and Deacon Kerry Scarlett, which takes the title 'Hidden Treasure' from the scripture in Isaiah 45:3, 'I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who call you by your name.'

We are encouraged to look for the hidden treasure, which are gifts of God, so that we may know that the God of our forefathers, our history, still calls us by name to serve and worship Him. These treasures of our faith may be found in scripture, prayer and fellowship; they may be the skills and treasures which we have to offer to God in service. They will require our earnest seeking, effort on our part, as we hear they are 'treasures of darkness', 'hidden in secret places', but they will be worthwhile as they assure us of that consistent love of God who calls us by our name.

Change can be challenging, but it also can be exciting. Who knows what treasures God has in store for us in the days ahead? I have to admit that while I am nervous to take up this role as Superintendent, I am also excited to see what God might do in and through us all, what riches we might discover together. I believe God still has a mighty work for us to do as Methodist people in the Tynedale Circuit and I look forward to sharing this part of the journey with you.

With every blessing,

Marie

Circuit Leaving Service 30th July 2023 at Haydon Bridge

We were privileged to have been chosen to host the Circuit Leaving Service for Rev. Jenny Porterpryde and Deacon Anne Taylor. Over 100 people from all around the Tynedale Circuit came to wish them well. Most hymns chosen were accompanied on the organ by David Kilner. We also sung 'Our God is a Great Big God' to actions. The Acomb Ladies Choir sang two songs including 'I dance and clap and sing' from the musical Törn Curtain that Haydon Bridge hosted last year.

It was a varied service led by both Jenny and Anne as well as Rev Marie Beard. Seeing both leaving ministers are known 'crafters' we had an activity making an origami heart and adding a biblical verse to it.

Senior Circuit Steward Millie Robinson presented Jenny and Anne with various gifts along with one for Anne's husband Eddie for his valuable and loyal support. Food donations for a buffet tea had been generously provided by various Churches and this was greatly appreciated.

We wish both Jenny and Anne every blessing for the future - for Jenny and also Richard as they relocate to work in different circuits within the Newcastle District and for Anne and Eddie as they move to Whitehaven and begin their well-earned retirement. May the Lord go with you Jenny, Richard, Anne and Eddie and bless you always

Kathleen Armstrong

We were very grateful for all that was done for our leaving services. It was so lovely to see you all even though it wasn't possible to speak to everyone individually. We were very touched by your lovely gifts and cards too.

Richard spent his childhood living 9 mins from a beach and is delighted to be 9 mins from one again (even more so when he discovered the beach side Gregg's is open from 6.30am til 9pm!) He is excitedly preparing to minister to Doxford Place and The Welcome Chapel (both in Cramlington) and Bedlington Colliery.

Jenny is looking forward to the challenge of superintending two circuits (Chester le Street and East Durham) and will be minister of Seaham, Houghton le Spring and Chester le Street Methodist Churches.



We miss you already and wish you every blessing for the year ahead.
Richard and Jenny



And a gift for Eddie!

Thank you for the love, kindness and generosity shown to Eddie and myself as we leave Tynedale Circuit. It has been overwhelming. We are moving to Whitehaven in Cumbria our new circuit will be Western Fells. We are looking forward to making new friends there. Anne and Eddie xx

Not only will we miss Anne & Eddie – Bellingham will miss them too.

A framed certificate was presented to them conferring Edward M Taylor and Carole Anne Taylor the title as Honorary Freeman of the Parish of Bellingham in recognition of their service to the people of Bellingham Parish.

Honorary Freeman is obviously a title that can be given to both genders and as a couple! JM



Church Mice

Karl Zorowski



And welcome to Rev Roberta Ritson and her husband Chris



Chris and I have lived in the Tyne Valley since 1993, bringing up our two daughters in Wylam.

Recently, I was part of the ecumenical team at Wylam Methodist Church, representing Horsley URC, helping with the holiday club. Some twenty years ago I took part as a parent and part time teacher.

Now I find myself, as newly ordained United Reformed Church minister, taking responsibility for the North Tyne Ecumenical partnerships of Bellingham and Wark as well as Horsley Village Church (URC) in the Tyne Valley.

My formation programme began in 2019 and was offered through Scottish College (URC and Congregational) in Glasgow. Academic studies were completed under the guidance of the Scottish Episcopal Institute. For most of that time I led services, online and in person, often in collaboration with Episcopal Church peers. I thoroughly enjoyed placements in three contrasting URC pastorates. Education for ministry – formal or ‘everyday’ - is a lifelong.

As a younger woman I found myself shadowing the late Sheila McCormack, a local Quaker and elder of the Stocksfield Meeting, a person renowned for her sensitive pastoral skills. In 2011, re-entering my childhood church, now part of the United Reformed Church, was a beautiful homecoming. I treasure the opportunities for music-making, for creativity with words and for close study of the Bible. I have learned so much from various traditions. Chris continues as a Quaker, following in his mother’s and grandparents’ footsteps.

We will continue living in Wylam with our cat, Mimi. Now that Chris is retired from Newcastle University you may also see us together in our newly refurbished micro-house, a converted blue mini camper van. I have started getting to know the people at North Tyne and look forward to more pastoral visiting, even as Sunday responsibilities intensify. I value these encounters. Ministry is not always ‘one way’. During events such as Messy Church and the Holiday Club, participants feel God’s Spirit guiding and blessing the group.

Wednesday will be my rest day. Chris and I enjoy gardening, long walks, music (Chris is in a ceilidh band) and, sometimes, we also enjoy being taken out of our comfort zone by grown up ‘children’. Our younger daughter has just married an Israeli citizen and this autumn we plan to visit the couple at their home in Tel Aviv.



The first week of the school summer holidays saw another brilliant and colourful children's Holiday Club at Prudhoe, based at the Methodist Church, but also using the Gate and St.Mary Magdelene as venues –

The Restoration Station!

The theme surrounded stories of Jesus including healings by pools or from a distance, the miraculous calming of a terrifying storm, forgiving friends over toasted fish and the greatest story of sacrifice ever! We explored how Jesus was more than merely a special man but was God's Son and that what he did restored the whole world!

We welcomed around 90 different children to the Club. Excluding the number of young people who gave up their time to attend and help at the Club as a Young Helper or Apprentice. These young people all did a smashing job of making sure things were where they were supposed to be, creating challenging quizzes, leading games and crafts, and helping both the children and the adults have an amazing time.

There were volunteers from various churches in both Stocksfield and Prudhoe who all came together to make this Club happen. Including people who could not be there during the week who prayed for the Club or donated to sponsor a child. Had so many people not given up their time and put so much effort into hosting and facilitating the week, the Club would not have been able to go ahead and those children may not have heard this summer that Jesus loves them. So a massive thank you to everyone involved, young and old, for all your hard work and efforts!

The children had an amazing time creating and playing and hearing stories. There were impossible animal bookmarks, storms in bottles, two silly presenters running a workshop, messy games, real life stories from workshop customers, parachute games, kintsugi paper plates, decorated lanterns, tasty fruits, a giant cross and even a visitor from Bible times every day! What a fun time.

Please continue to hold the Club in your prayers, especially the children and families we have connected with. Some of whom maybe have heard for the first time that Jesus died, rose again and restored the world!

The Restoration Station was repeated as an ecumenical venture at Wylam in the third week of the holidays.

Ruth Lindridge

Hexham Holiday Club was also held in the first week of the school summer holidays. A programme devised by The Bible Society's Martha Flavell, using stories involving water from the Open the Book programme. These stories were enacted at Hexham's bandstand each morning and as children were familiar with the format, having seen them at school assemblies, there were a lot of volunteers to take part in the story.



Hexham Holiday Club has been one of Scripture Union's supported missions to children since 1971. Traditionally the club has used SU's Holiday Club resource material. They were asked if the club could design its own programme. When the idea had been explained they thought it a great idea, especially as they were familiar with the Open the Book format having taken the programme on before passing it to the Bible Society to develop.

There was a certain amount of leeway with the scripted Lion Storyteller Bible as the venues were not school assemblies, it became known as Explore the Book. Each day the theme was carried into six age groups in five of Hexham's churches. Each age group team developing their own age related programme on the theme of the day.

At the service on Sunday, Martha read the story of the woman at the well from the Storyteller Bible on which Rev Michael Holland reflected before commissioning the team for the week ahead. Over the week there was 'In the Beginning' when God called to the sea "Come forth, splashing things"; 'A Special Promise' when the rainbow appeared after Noah and his family came out of the ark; 'The Secret Baby' when Moses was discovered in the Nile; 'The Great Escape' as the Israelites were chased by the Egyptians through the Red Sea and 'Across the River' through the Jordan and into the promised land.



Martha Flavell reading 'The Secret Baby' as Moses is discovered in the bulrushes

The team were members of Hexham churches, ably supported by a junior team of 14 – 17 year old's, most of whom had been coming to Holiday Club for up to 12 years.

All committed to make Jesus known to children and their families.

Over 200 children attended during the week.

PROFILE

TOM DODDS – SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL PREACHERS MEETING

There's an old saying about cobbler's children having the worst shoes. I spent most of my working life in marketing and PR - jobs that require good writing skills - but the hardest task is to write a few words about myself!

Many of you will know me as a local preacher, and as a local bus driver. I became a bus driver relatively late in my career - when I thought that my 'professional' career was at an end.



How wrong was I! After two years driving buses, I found myself in a unique role doing political PR in the bus industry. When that came to an end, I became a local bus driver around Hexham for my last four years before Jill and I took early retirement at Easter 2021.

I came to preaching relatively late, too, becoming fully accredited in 2012 (although I completed the study course the year before - it was only that there wasn't an upcoming circuit service until the following year). I was a member of a congregation in Crawcrook when I felt the call to preach, but by the time I became accredited we were living in Prudhoe and the Tynedale circuit had been established.

Despite that, church and Christ has always been part of my life. Growing up in the west end of Newcastle and being brought up a Roman Catholic, I went through the Catholic schools system. I became a member of the Methodist Church nearly 30 years ago.

So, now you know that about me, you can understand where I draw a lot of inspiration and anecdotes that illuminate my preaching - bus driving certainly produced more than its fair share of those! As well as preaching, I currently serve as the secretary to the Local Preachers meeting, which I find a challenge because 'admin' has never been my strong point nor something that I enjoy; so I'm trying to use technology to keep the paperwork to a minimum and make us as efficient as we can be so that it doesn't get in the way of our true purpose of spreading the Good News of our redemption through Jesus Christ! And that's something that I hope my preaching encourages everyone to do!

And the photograph? My indoor winter hobby is making N gauge model railways - now not many of you knew that!

Death of Free Methodist Minister Rev J Dawson

The following could even be today, overworked, too much to do but we need to remember that life was much shorter than today. I found the following while researching for Hexham Abbey on one of its Rectors, who was close friends with the nonconformist ministers of the town.

The history of West End Methodist church goes back to the United Free Methodist set up in 1857. In 1859 they occupied a building known as 1 Giles Place in Hexham and in 1862 they moved to Tanners Road in Cockshaw area of the town. They built a chapel at Leazes Terrace in 1905 for Sunday School and Church, extending it in 1935 to its present buildings.

‘Free Methodism has, in the death of Mr Dawson, lost a faithful and zealous minister. Although brought up in circumstances of poverty and trial, he, after his conversion, fought manfully against the obstacles in his way and acquired a considerable fund of biblical and literary knowledge. As is the custom in Methodism, a young man with such tendencies was speedily put upon the local preacher plan and his services in that capacity proved sufficiently acceptable to warrant the further step of appointment on the regular ministry. He was sent to Hexham circuit about four years ago and soon acquired a satisfactory position amongst a people capable of appreciating humility and loving zeal. In his anxiety to spread the blessings of religion he over taxed his strength and two winters ago laid the foundation of that disease which has finally hurried him to his reward. Sent by the Assembly to a more genial climate he hoped for a restoration to his usual health. But that hope proved fallacious, he returned to the north, amongst those friends who best new him and valued him. He preached his last sermon at Kirkheaton six weeks ago and arrived at Hexham so utterly broken down that he only reached here to die. Death did not take him by surprise nor for a moment did his “faith waver nor his love grow cold”. Free Methodism has lost in Mr Dawson a promising young minister and the Hexham circuit an earnest and willing labourer.’

‘The work of any Methodist minister – Wesleyan, Primitive or Free Church – is generally arduous that only robust constitutions can survive the “wear and tear”, the frequent preaching, the long journeys and the varied inconveniences of “homeless wayfarers” as they may truly be described. Only a week ago the young Wesleyan minister of Shotley Bridge Circuit died suddenly from over exertion. Darwin’s famous theory of only the strongest surviving is especially true of the ministers of the different sects which own John Wesley as their origin.’

‘Methodism expands its men with great liberality, and, for its own sake, it must either be more careful in its selection, or be more attentive to their comfort and more considerate as to their amount of labour.’

PRUDHOE METHODIST CHURCH CELEBRATES THE CORONATION OF KING CHARLES III

For the King's Coronation we at Prudhoe decorated the outside of our church with flags and bunting, and on our large notice board near the bus stop had printed out the words LONG LIVE THE KING surrounded by crowns.

On Sunday the 7th May we had a Coronation Cake which was shared by all our church family.



Sylvia Waters

Hexham Brass

Two concerts this quarter at Methodist Churches

- **Tuesday 26th. September 7.30 pm**
Hexham West End in aid of Children's Cancer North
- **Saturday 18th. November 7.00 pm**
Haydon Bridge. (This will be a new programme of music from that at West End)

Psalm 150 name nine types of musical instruments to be used to praise God. While the exact translation of some of these instruments are unknown the Jewish commentators have identified the shofar, lyre, harp, drum, organ, cymbal AND trumpet. Saint Augustine observes that all human faculties are used in producing music from these instruments. "The breath is employed in blowing the trumpet; the fingers are used in striking the strings of the psalter and the harp, the whole hand is exerted in beating the timbrel: the feet move to the dance".



Tynedale Methodist Circuit

Circuit Meeting June 2023

Summary

Circuit Meeting took place at Fourstones Methodist Church on Thursday, 15 June 2023.

Rev Jenny opened the meeting by welcoming everyone including David Calverey and read out a letter of thanks from Rev Fiona.

David Kilner, Circuit Treasurer, reported that Circuit Assessment payments for May had been received and that final adjustments on amounts would be made in November when the Circuit accounts are finalised.

The audited accounts and the Annual Trustees Report were approved and accepted ready for submission to the Charity Commission as part of the yearly return.

The Property Report noted that the Haltwhistle Manse has now been sold, that West Wylam (Ebenezer) chapel is in the final stages of sale and that Barrasford chapel will be put on the market soon.

A lack of safeguarding training opportunities was discussed, including the difficulties this can cause if people are unable to attend training before their certification expires.

Two matters regarding grants were reported. The Hexham Trinity District Grant application to support mental health work at Hexham Middle School has been withdrawn, and the CMTF Grant application approved in December 2022 will now be used to fund one role supporting Youth & Community work, with interviews for this role to be held in August.

Circuit Meeting agreed to extend Millie Robinson's term of office as Senior Circuit Steward by one additional year.

Several notices were given at the end of the meeting which included details of Rev Gareth Sherwood's ordination at Coventry on 25th. June and a sending service for Richard Porter 2nd. July.

Thanks to Deacon Anne for her work and ministry in the Circuit were also minuted.

The next meeting will be held on **Thursday, 14 September 2023.**

FOCUS ON

ACOMB METHODIST CHURCH

We may be a small chapel at the bottom of the village but we are still part of the heart of the community and we like to reach out to it through 'Acomb Local', the village facebook page and the 'Acomb Village News' magazine.



The latest edition congratulated Rev Gareth Sherwood on his ordination. We still encourage the community to use the Food Bank Bin through the gates as they have been very generous over the 16 months we have had it. Our coffee mornings on the first Saturday of the month are popular. On Saturday 1st July the neighbours nearly had to call in the 'noise police' as the friendly chatter scaled the decibels! Even better – over £200 was raised for the Great north Air Ambulance.

As we do not meet the Connexional requirement of the number of trustees we are federated with West End Methodist Church and Rev Gareth is our minister.

Through the choir we draw on voices from other churches which encourages a sense of joint fellowship. Members are also part of the ecumenical Open the Book team that go, not only into Acomb First School, but Newbrough and Haydon Bridge schools every two weeks during school term time in which Gareth is also involved.

Sing to the Lord a new song! (Psalm 96)

That's exactly what we try to do within Acomb choir – both sing a new song – but also much-loved older songs - to the Lord!

The choir at Acomb has developed and evolved over the years - and we remember fondly all those who have shared in our musical medley and pilgrimage of song together. A journey of music – but also worship, praise, reflection and celebration!

These days we could perhaps subtitle Acomb Ladies Choir: **'With One Voice'**. Although we meet and are based at Acomb – our choir members are drawn from Hexham West End, Fourstones, St John Lee Parish Church (yes – we've always been ecumenical), Stamfordham as well as Acomb itself! A 'mixed bunch' you might well say – but united in Christian song – coming together as if 'with one voice'! This ensemble also includes Jim Laidlow - who conducts & draws upon his considerable experience to direct our musical offering – with John Wilkinson providing accompaniment (including that much loved line-practice)! No wonder everyone is relieved when the kettle boils and it's time for a cuppa (+ biscuit) after 'doing lines'!



Back Row – Left to Right. Eva, Sheila, Margery, Shirley, Carolyn, Margaret, Angela
 Front Row – Left to Right. Anne, Gwenneth, Judith, Dorothy, Margaret, John
 Sadly, missing from the photo - Jim, Anne, Sybil, Joyce, Christine, Helen

Within the choir we've always aimed to share in and draw upon the rich variety & tapestry of Christian music we're so fortunate to have available these days. From harmony pieces to worship songs – well-loved Christmas music to Roger Jones – Gospel music to reflective Taize chants – and much else besides! In fact - we're still enjoying finding and exploring some wonderful new music and words in our most recent hymn / worship song collection – 'Singing the Faith'. On the odd occasion – we might even come up with our very own Acomb Choir words option - to slot in at just the right place!

For many years we've aimed to prepare our choice of music around a particular Christian theme - telling a story and delivering a message. We've, therefore, interspersed appropriate music with related Bible readings, stories, poetry, prayers, reflection and – sometimes – even drama - plus props possibly!

In the past this pattern – our trademark format – was usually centred on an itinerant concert-based programme delivered at different Chapels.

Then came the pandemic and – of course – singing (like so much else) abruptly stopped! We had to put our voices in a jar on the shelf or simply keep singing over the kitchen sink or in the bath!

But after discussion & careful prayerful consideration we felt that it was safe to resume meeting as a choir in July 2022. Would anyone turn up? We did - and were generally keen to get singing together again.

Since then - we've had to reassess what we do and how we do it. Generally - the concerts of yesteryear are now much less a thing. So - we thought about the occasional joint choir-led service on a Sunday morning - again with music and worship built around a particular theme. We offered this option to the Circuit & then waited & watched for the next Plan to hit the press. The rest is history . . .

For instance, in October last year the choir introduced a service at West End around the theme: 'And who is my neighbour?' Then on the evening of Good Friday this year the choir followed in the footsteps of Jesus taking us to the very foot of the cross. Come 23rd July our next choir-led service was planned as 'Summer Special Praise'! This included a virtual trip to Lindisfarne in the footsteps of Saint Aidan and hearing Carolyn's very own reflections on a recent pilgrimage across the sands to Holy Island. To compliment this - our music selection included 2 pieces by the Northumbrian Community. We also focused on what must have been one of the biggest picnics ever - the feeding of the 5,000 by Jesus! We had planned a deck chair & beach ball placed at the front door to welcome everyone into worship. However, considering the torrential downpour that day the deckchair didn't quite make it - but our Summer Special Praise certainly did & continued regardless!

The next choir-led service is planned for Sunday 29th October at Fourstones this time - you'd be most welcome if you want to come along & see what we've got in store that day!

Yes - a 'mixed bunch' maybe! Or - we hope - more a parable in action (Christian neighbours united) - coming together as part of God's family to share & celebrate HIS Good News in word, song, fellowship & praise!

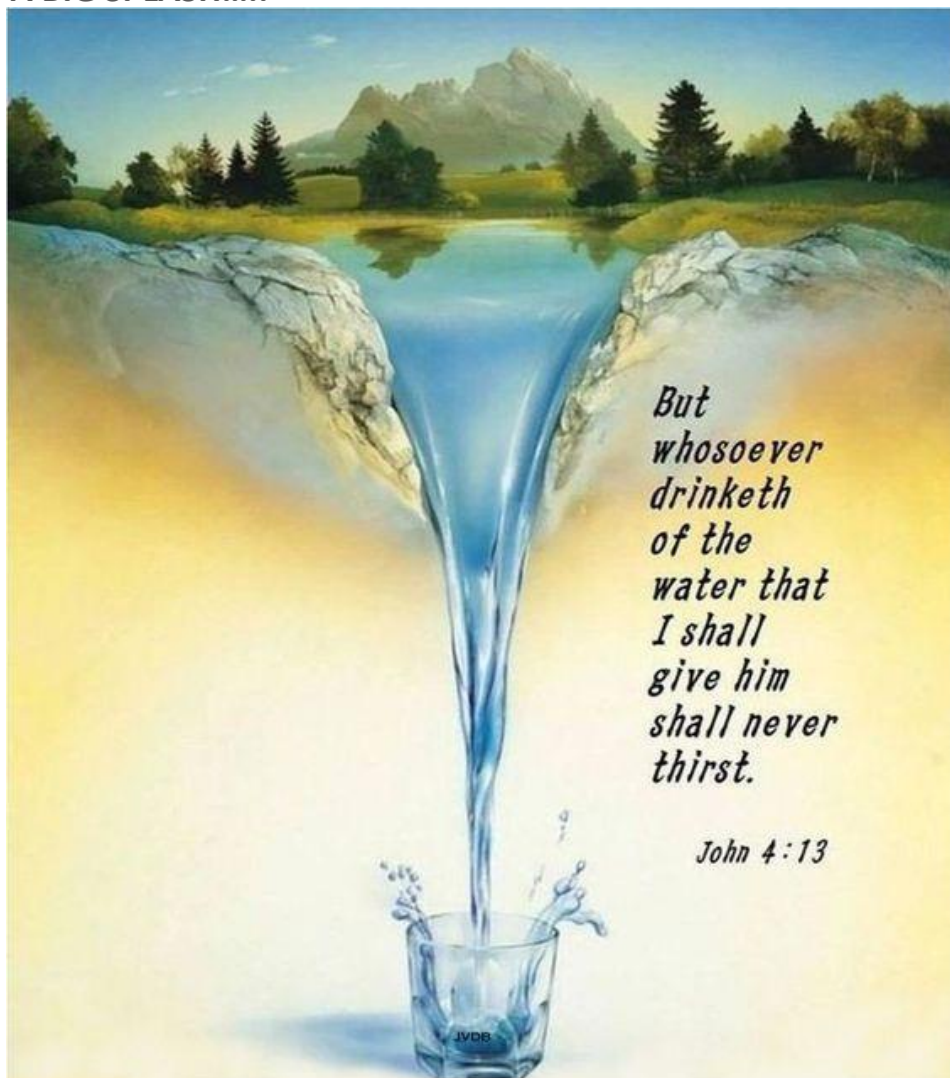
The two well-tuned chapel pianos are well used as the Hexham Amateur Stage Society also use the chapel for singing rehearsals in preparation of their two shows at the Queens Hall each year.



Eva as the storyteller and Dorothy as the introducer and concluser at an Open the Book assembly at Acomb First School

David approaching King Saul saying that he would 'take on' Goliath of Gath.

A BIG SPLASH.....



*But
whosoever
drinketh
of the
water that
I shall
give him
shall never
thirst.*

John 4:13

The one resource we cannot live without is water. Water - Refreshes, Cleanses, Restores, Enables. It gives us energy to thrive in any task we set out to accomplish. In John 4:13-14 Jesus says, Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

Heavenly Father, when my soul needs to be filled, my thirst needs to be quenched, and my hunger needs to be satiated. I gladly confess my desire to experience Jesus' living water more intensely. I have tasted your goodness. I have drunk from your fountain. Keep your life-giving stream flowing in me. In Jesus' name I pray. AMEN



Tynedale

Methodist Circuit

Bellingham and North Tyne MURC

Wark Joint Partnership

Rev Roberta Ritson

Hexham Trinity

Hexham West End

Acomb

Rev Gareth Sherwood

Riding Mill

Corbridge with Slaley JP

Haltwhistle

Rev Marie Beard

Wylam

Prudhoe

Stocksfield

Rev Fiona Calverey

Allen Valley

Haydon Bridge

Fourstones with Warden

Rev Michael Holland

www.tynedalemethcircuit.org

Living Waters is co-ordinated by John Martin for the Tynedale Circuit.

If you have any comments / suggestions / ideas / photos for the Winter edition
please send to: -

John Martin

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'phone 01434 674425

By **Monday 20th. November 2023** please.