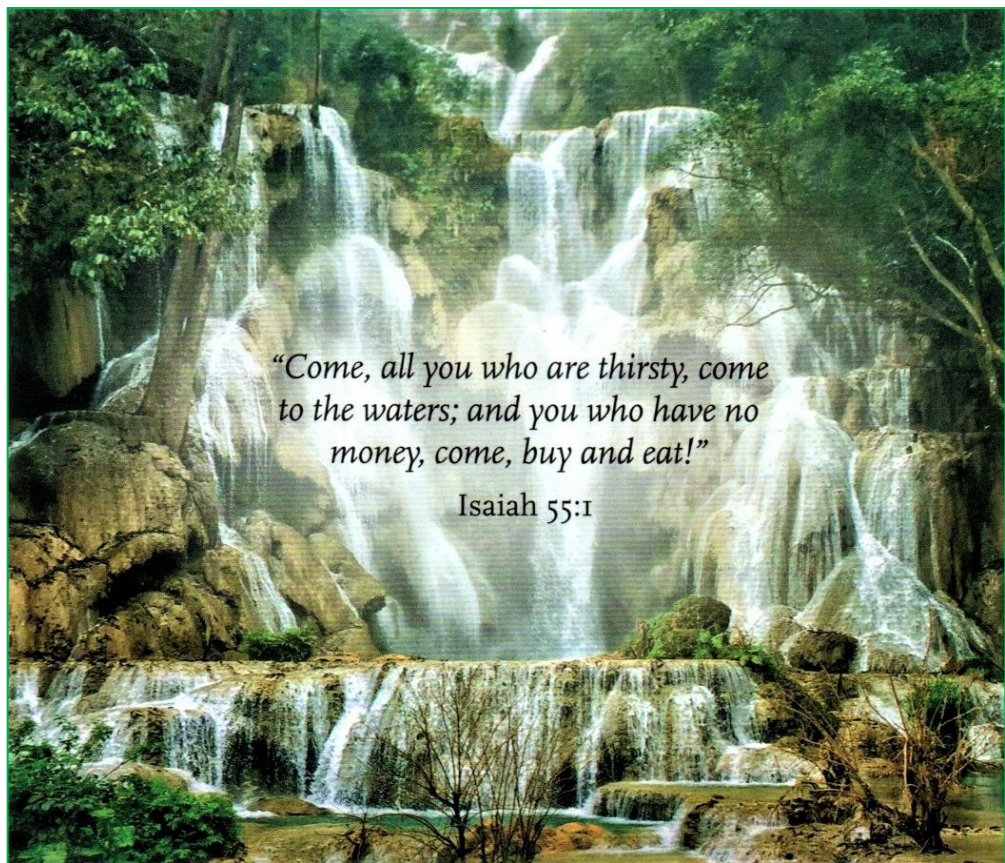


# **LIVING WATERS**



*“Come, all you who are thirsty, come  
to the waters; and you who have no  
money, come, buy and eat!”*

Isaiah 55:1

***Encouraging    Enabling    Challenging***

***in the Tynedale Methodist Circuit***

***SPRING 2023***

Hi Friends

As we move towards Lent, we often think of this season as primarily about repentance. That's not wrong, but there is a temptation here. Lent can easily become a depressing and debilitating season of dredging up our worst and ignoring any good that may be in us. But Lent should be so much more than this.

Repentance is not so much about focussing on how bad we are. It's about recognising that we are God-imagined and God-beloved beings with gifts, goodness and God-given glory within us. Sometimes we forget this and so we need to recognise the things that keep us from living as our best selves. And we need to be more intentional about embracing the things that empower us to show up fully, authentically and courageously in our lives.

In the last few years, the pain, trauma and grief of our chaotic world have taken a toll on our mental, physical and spiritual health. Many of us have been tempted to define ourselves by our suffering. We have lost our joy, our sense of aliveness, and our authentic selves in our quest to survive. But I believe that life and hope can be found even in the most painful seasons of our lives. It can take work, but that's what spiritual practice is for. And Lent is a season with tremendous life-changing potential.

The first thing Lent calls us to do, on Ash Wednesday, is to get real, to resist our world's culture of play-acting that everything is always wonderful. We can't find health and life until we acknowledge all of life's seasons, the grief along with the joy. Let us take the time to explore what it means to be real with ourselves and others about our struggles.

And then, the next step is to resist the temptation to find shortcuts out of our pain and struggle. Jesus' temptations in the wilderness were essentially about trying to escape the cross and accomplish his work in the quickest, most painless way. But as his responses to these temptations show, shortcuts never lead us to our richest, fullest and most connected lives. This Lent we can explore how to resist the shortcuts that our pain-avoidant world offers us.

Lent can be a deeply healing and transforming journey if we allow it to be. We just need to travel through this season mindfully and intentionally, learning from its practices and wisdom to live more deeply.

Blessings Rev Fiona

**PALM SUNDAY TRIVIA.** When Pontius Pilate entered Jerusalem from Caesarea on a horse, he came with the controlling authority of the Roman Empire. When Jesus entered the city on a donkey he came in peace under submission to the authority of His father. Hosanna.



Further to Rev. Gareth's appeal in the summer edition in supporting families from Ukraine that are being hosted locally.

"I want say a big thank you to everyone who has given money to help me buy this laptop. I am using it for my studies in Graphic Design, which is important for my future.

I am Max Grenchuk, a Ukrainian man who is really thankful for your financial support.

I see how Jesus has shown me His love in England.

Thank you God for your blessings to me..."

Max

## Haydon Bridge

Instead of our usual Christmas Fayre, we decided to hold a Gift Day with Afternoon Teas. Despite the inclement weather on the day, a number of folk came along to join us.



### December Gift Day with Afternoon Tea

A substantial amount was raised for our Church funds and an enjoyable afternoon was had by all. Most of the caterers are pictured here with some of the food on offer.

We are holding a **Lent Study Course** based on the book 'The Prayers of Jesus' from 22nd February until 29th March 7pm each Wednesday evening with Deacon Anne. All are very welcome to join us, especially for those who have not already joined a Lent Study elsewhere.

### Friends from Hexham Community Church

Chris and Brenda Daniels plus friends have been leading a monthly worship time for us on the **third Wednesday of each month at 7pm** for some time now. This will resume after Easter on 19th April and again everyone is welcome.

Kathleen Armstrong

## Catton Community Lunch have won an AWARD !

Our lunches at Catton began way back in 2004 and have continued monthly since then. Last year we discovered the Age UK Lunch Club in Allendale had closed following Covid and agreed to offer places to their diners. One of the problems we had encountered at Catton was the need to transport some people due to increasing frailty and our perennial problems with car parking. This was discussed at the Allen Valley Church Council. Our treasurer, Caroline Pringle, mentioned a competition launched by Methodist Insurance for their 150th Celebratory Awards.

Rev Alex Dunstan agreed to make an application and we thought nothing more about it. Then in September 2022 Alex contacted us with the amazing news that we were one of the competition winners and £1,500 had been awarded for transport costs to our lunch. *You may have seen this in the Methodist Recorder.*

Here is an extract from the press release that Alex submitted after the awards were announced.

“It is a very remote rural area and that brings with it deprivation and isolation that you don’t get in towns and cities. ....Recognising the huge benefits to mental health, well-being and physical and spiritual nourishment, the church tries to supply transport (when needed) to and from the *Community Lunch*. The £1500 prize money will mean that *regular transport can be provided* and allow the church to bring diners in from very rural locations.”



Some beneficiaries of the Catton Community Lunch, December 2022

A big thank you to our Treasurer, Caroline Pringle, for bringing this competition to our attention and to Alex Dunstan for making the application. Grateful thanks also go to Methodist Insurance for their generous award.

Catton Chapel lunches are on the first Thursday of each month at 12.30pm. We offer a 2 course meal, cooked in the Chapel with tea/coffee to follow. No set charge but donations accepted. The local GP practice has been informed of our service and we are about to contact the Carer agencies also. Although our initial volunteers have reduced over the years we have been able to recruit replacements from our local community.



The Catton Community Lunch Club Volunteers

Ann Potter

## Church Mice

Copyright Karl A. Zorowski



Since October 2021, Trinity Hexham have hosted a new initiative called DiSH which stands for Dinners in School Holidays as a response to the ongoing struggles families who rely on school meals are facing trying to provide food, warmth and an affordable space throughout the half term holidays.



While the response was slow to start, as we work to build trust with those in our community who would like the support, the situation in our nation has not improved but for many it has got worse as we all deal with the cost of living crisis and the rise in fuel bills.

October 2022 saw us serve over 100 meals across the whole week, including a number of Ukrainian families sharing with us. We are open to any and all who wish to come along and receive the love and care we set out to give as our calling as followers of Jesus. So as we prepare for the February half term, with bookings coming in and a team of willing volunteers ready to support the town of Hexham during that week.

As the DiSH initiative looks forward, with the road ahead uncertain in many ways; we know that unfortunately the need will not just simply stop for any foreseeable time, so we are challenged with how we show our love to one another through our acts of service during a week like DiSH but also reaching out in other ways.

Tara Barrick

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### Guess the Open the Book Story



## PROFILE

### Martyn Johnson, Circuit Steward



When Ruth and I relocated to the North East ten years ago we looked forward to a time of peace and tranquility in beautiful Tynedale.

Coming from a part of East Yorkshire called Holderness (an ancient wapentake, a subdivision of the county) which was devoid of hills but blessed with wide open skies, we eagerly anticipated exploring the countryside.

**But why Tynedale?** you ask....simple....Following University our sons found jobs in Edinburgh and Newcastle and we wanted to be nearer to them.

**Why now?**...Ruth wished to work in a less stressful nursing environment, and I had taken the opportunity to retire from dental practice.

In Holderness we had both held positions in the local Methodist Church and Circuit, but my tenure had come to an end, so this seemed the right time to move and the thought of being a member of a church family without official responsibilities was very tempting.

However, it was not long before I was approached and asked to help at the church in Prudhoe and later I was asked to consider becoming a Circuit Steward. Apparently serving as a Circuit Steward is not an onerous task as it only entails a couple of meetings a year. Having held the position before I was not fooled but accepted the offer as I believe serving as a Circuit Steward benefits me in my spiritual journey by gaining a better understanding of Methodism, the community of Christ, its needs and desires and is part of ministry in the church. Being new to the area it also has added advantage of being part of a new family of like-minded friends.

So, what has my first year as a Circuit Steward been like...interesting yet fulfilling to say the least. Unexpected resignations and unanticipated stationing, reviewing circuit staffing, buying, and selling church properties, manse renovations and more. As I mentioned earlier 'only a couple of meetings a year'. On reflection much has been accomplished over the year by a gifted, dedicated, an enthusiastic and spirit led group of ministerial staff and volunteers who I now consider friends in Christ. Though I am now relieved to report that next year should be a much simpler year to be a Circuit Steward.

Now for the plug. We need additional Circuit Stewards. If you feel that you are called, please see the advert in this edition and speak to your minister for more information.

## Summary of Circuit Meeting - 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Matters presented and discussed during the meeting included

- an update on the continuing close working partnership between Acomb and West End churches
- the resources available to churches and individuals for the Methodist Way of Life
- a request for churches to consider holding their worship services at different times to help with scheduling the plan of appointments.

The meeting agreed to adopt the Safer Recruitment Policy for 2022 and an update on the recruitment for a Circuit Safeguarding Officer for Vulnerable Adults was reported.

**Reports** received by the meeting included the

Financial Report, the Local Preachers' Meeting Report, the Annual Manse Reports and the Property Reports on

- Ebenezer, West Wylam
- Wesley Manse, Haltwhistle
- Catton Manse and
- Barrasford chapel

A letter from Joseph Tulip was read to the meeting following his leaving as Communications Co-ordinator and it was agreed that the Circuit Leadership Team should consider the reappointment of this role.

A grant application by Hexham Trinity to support provision of their Children & Youth Workers was provisionally approved pending confirmation by the Circuit Leadership Team

Rev Marie provided a summary of the repurposing of the Corbridge Princes Street chapel.

The next meeting will be held on **Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup>. March 2023.**

Loving and eternal God, we give you thanks for the Tynedale Circuit.

Grant that we may become an increasingly vibrant, Spirit filled, Christ centred people; Faithful to Scripture, deeply rooted in prayer; and with a heart to follow your vision for mission and growth, as we catch and share glimpses of Your glory in our lives.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work in us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! **Amen**



# Wondering if you're called to be ... a steward?

**Circuit Stewards play a vital role in  
the team that leads the Circuit**

**Good stewards are:**

- ⇒ Praying people
- ⇒ Visionary
- ⇒ Practical
- ⇒ Caring, supportive and mindful of others' needs

**If you think that God can't use you.....just remember....**

Noah was a drunk, Abraham was too old, Isaac was a daydreamer, Jacob was a liar, Leah was ugly, Joseph was arrogant, Moses was a stutterer, Gideon was not confident, Samson was a womanizer, Rahab was a prostitute, Jeremiah and Timothy were too young, David was an adulterer, Elijah was suicidal, Isaiah preached naked, Jonah ran from God, Naomi was a widow, Job was a bankrupt, John the Baptist ate bugs, Peter denied Christ, the disciples fell asleep while praying, Martha worried about everything, the Samaritan woman was divorced MORE than once, Zaccheus was too small, Paul was too religious, Timothy had an ulcer...AND Lazarus was dead!

No more excuses now. You may feel unworthy but God used these people in His timeline. God wants to use YOU to your full potential in whatever experience and transferrable skills you may have in His service. Can they be used to support the Circuit Leadership Team?

## So what were you doing on Valentine's Day?



This collage was one of the activities of 'Messy Vintage' held during the afternoon on February 14<sup>th</sup>. at Fourstones Chapel. The title of this particular monthly service was 'Valentine – Love is.....'

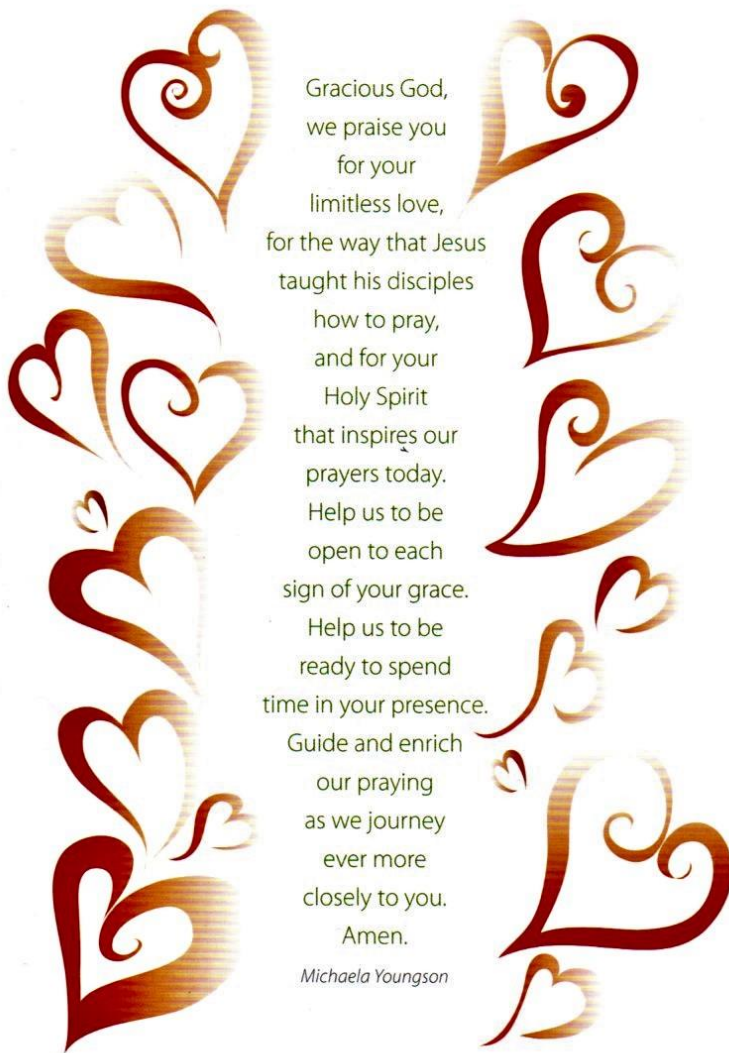
**Saint Valentine** was a Roman priest who ministered to persecuted Christians. He was martyred on February 14<sup>th</sup>. 296 and buried on the outskirts of Rome during the persecution of Emperor Diocletian, the last major persecution of the Roman Empire. The feast of St. Valentine of February 14<sup>th</sup>. was first established in 496 by Pope Gelasius I, who included Valentine among all those "... whose names are justly revered among men, but whose acts are known only to God" and has been celebrated by western Christianity ever since. His Saints' Day has been associated with a tradition of courtly love.

This may have come about as he is said to have been imprisoned because he defied the emperor's orders by secretly marrying soldiers. According to legend, during his imprisonment, Valentine restored sight to the blind daughter of his jailor, causing the whole household to convert to Christianity and before his execution he wrote her a letter signed "Your Valentine".

Valentine's Day in something like its current form rose to prominence in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with people beginning to send cards and give presents to their partners.

'Love is not breathlessness, it is not excitement, and it is not the promulgation of promises of eternal passion. That is just being in love, which any of us can convince ourselves we are. **Love itself is what is left over when being in love has burned away.**

(Saint Augustine)



Gracious God,  
we praise you  
for your  
limitless love,  
for the way that Jesus  
taught his disciples  
how to pray,  
and for your  
Holy Spirit  
that inspires our  
prayers today.  
Help us to be  
open to each  
sign of your grace.  
Help us to be  
ready to spend  
time in your presence.  
Guide and enrich  
our praying  
as we journey  
ever more  
closely to you.  
Amen.

*Michaela Youngson*

From the Methodist booklet 'Prayer in your pocket' edited by Michaela Youngson  
(President of the Methodist conference 2018/2019)

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### **Guess the Open the Book Story**

**'The Secret Baby'** Pharaoh's daughter discovers Moses in a basket beside the Nile after Pharaoh orders all baby Hebrew boys to be killed. His sister Myriam was watching and able to get their mother to become Moses' nurse while being brought up in the Royal Palace. @Acomb First School.



**Tynedale**  
Methodist Circuit

Bellingham,  
Falstone/Kielder, Wark  
Fourstones with Warden,  
Haydon Bridge  
*Deacon Anne Taylor*

Hexham Trinity  
*Rev Jenny Porterpryde*

Hexham West End  
Acomb  
*Rev Gareth Sherwood*

Riding Mill  
Corbridge  
Slaley  
*Rev Marie Beard*

Haltwhistle  
Allen Valley  
*Rev Michael Holland*

Wylam  
Prudhoe  
Stocksfield  
*Rev Fiona Calverey*

[www.tynedalemethcircuit.org](http://www.tynedalemethcircuit.org)

Living Waters is co-ordinated by John Martin & Team for Tynedale Circuit. If you have any comments / suggestions / contributions / ideas / photos for the Summer 2023 edition, please send to: -

**John Martin,**  
email: [john\\_martin\\_sb@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:john_martin_sb@yahoo.co.uk)  
'phone 01434 674425 /07964 616555

**By Monday 15<sup>th</sup>. May 2023 please**