

# THE REVIEW

DECEMBER 2018



THE ANGELS' SONG AND THE SHEPHERDS' VISIT

WADDINGTON STREET UNITED REFORMED CHURCH,  
DURHAM CITY DH1 4BG

Church Website: [www.durhamurc.org.uk](http://www.durhamurc.org.uk)

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY AND CHURCH NEWS

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**Ministerial Services** – Anyone requiring the services of a Minister should contact their own Elder who will make enquiries on their behalf.

**Time of Sunday Services** – 10.45 a.m.

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### WEEKLY NOTICE SHEETS –

Please forward details of items and events for the weekly notice sheets to Peter Galloway – email [pagalloway@hotmail.com](mailto:pagalloway@hotmail.com) or mobile phone number **07 763 912 670**.

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**COPY DATE FOR THE FEBRUARY 2019 REVIEW IS – SUNDAY 20TH JANUARY 2019.**  
Please note there will be no Review in JANUARY 2019.

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**STUDENT EVENINGS IN 2019 – TUESDAYS 29th JANUARY and 12th FEBRUARY.**

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### FUNDRAISING NEWS –

**In November, Revd. John Durell** gave an interesting slide show of the journey he and Hillian made by car from Chicago. This followed on after the lunch in the Hall after morning service. Donations from these two events, in aid of the Church project – the **WADDINGTON STREET CENTRE** – raised **£446 – a wonderful total. Thanks to everyone who helped achieve it.**

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### Christmas Cards ...

The Christmas Card display will appear in the vestibule in December. Once again, members are invited to put up one card to the congregation and to donate to the current Church project the money they would have spent on sending individual cards. This will be the last fundraising event for this year's project, the Waddington Street Centre. Your participation in this would be much appreciated.

**Kath Ogilvie**

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### WEST END REFUGEE SERVICE –

As in past years, WERS would really appreciate your help in making Christmas a more pleasant time for their clients. They would welcome toiletries for men and women (soaps, shower gels, shampoo, toothpaste etc.) as well as towels, woollen hats, scarves, gloves and socks. Basic biscuits would also be gratefully received.

The last Sunday for collection from Waddington Street URC will be **Sunday 9th December**. Many thanks. **Kath Ogilvie**



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY AND CHURCH NEWS

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**Well done ...** to Yvonne Melville and David Woods on the excellent booklet they produced about the Waddington Street Fallen of World Wars I and II. They did a huge amount of research to produce this interesting and informative booklet about the men named on the plaques in our Church and this will help us to remember them as people and not just anonymous names.

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### **Waddington Street Food bank needs Volunteers – particularly on Mondays and Fridays.**

The Food bank runs from 11.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday (plus time either side to set up and tidy away). The main roles are packing food parcels, processing vouchers, making toasties and chatting to people. Most volunteers come on the same day each week, but it is possible to be more flexible than this.

Please contact the Food bank **0191 303 7559** or email Catherine Braddock at [catherine@durhamdp.org.uk](mailto:catherine@durhamdp.org.uk) if you can help.

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**Footsteps ...** The November/December issue of Northern Synod's Footsteps will be pinned to the noticeboard in the Church Hall for anyone who wants to read it. Thanks to Yvonne for this.

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### **CHRISTMAS THANK YOU'S ...**

A teenage boy writes his Thank You letters! (by Mick Gowar)

This was read by John and Hillian Durell's grandson, Ian, at the Christmas Day service in our church in 2017.



**Dear Auntie** – Oh, what a nice jumper. I've always adored powder blue – and fancy you thinking of orange and pink for the stripes – how clever of you!

**Uncle**, The soap is terrific. So useful and such a kind thought and how did you guess that I'd just used the last of the soap that last Christmas brought.

**Dear Gran**, Many thanks for the hankies. Now I really can't wait for the 'flu – and the daisies embroidered in red round the 'M' for Michael – how thoughtful of you!

**Dear Cousin** – What socks! And the same sort you wear, so you must be the last word in style and I'm certain you're right that the luminous green *will* make me stand out a mile.

**Dear Sister**, I quite understand your concern – it's a risk sending jam in the post. But I think I've pulled out all the big bits of glass, so it won't taste **too** sharp spread on toast.

**Dear Grandad**, Don't fret. I'm delighted. So *don't* think your gift will offend. I'm not at all hurt that you gave up this year and just sent me a fiver to spend!



**David Thornborrow writes –**

“We were pleased to greet a large number of students at our first night of the new sessional programme. A number of the students who attended on 30th October were encouraged to do so after commendation from second year students who had attended during the last academic year. We provided a few indoor fireworks and had some Halloween fun; including ducking for apples. Students had the opportunity to build friendships within their own community as well as open up links with our own church membership. The next event is due to be held on 20th November.”



**December ...**

December, December,  
A month to remember,  
A month full of darkness and light,  
A month full of rushing  
And sharing and hoping,  
A month full of one special night.



**What would you like for Christmas?**

A little girl went to visit Father Christmas in the local garden centre grotto. He welcomed her with a smile and the question of what she would like for Christmas. The little girl gasped, and stared up at him in horror. “Didn’t you get my email?!”



**EDITOR'S LETTER  
DEAR READERS,**



Les and I enjoyed the Thursford Christmas Spectacular with its excellent dancing, singing, costumes, comedy and the music of the mighty Wurlitzer organ. How a man can play over 3 keyboards and work the pedals at the same time is a mystery to me! The decorations were colourful and fabulous inside and outdoors and people had come from places as far apart as Cornwall and Northumberland. This was our fourth Thursford Show and I really commend it to anyone who as not yet seen it. We stayed at Dunston Hall Hotel, a mock-Elizabethan Grade 11 listed building which has original oak screens and a magnificent staircase. Our room was modern and very well appointed.



How time flies – our Grandson, Nathan, was 18 in November and planning an extended celebration of this event! His sister, Lauren, is delighted that the article which appeared in The Review about her trip to Tanzania as a Volunteer student nurse has been printed in The Nursing Times.

If you have anything you wish to contribute to The Review, please let me have it.

*Lucille Thomson*

The next issue of The Review will be published on **Sunday 3rd February 2019**. Contributions please to Lucille Thomson at church or BY POST or Tel. **0191-3861052** or e-mail **lesthomson@talktalk.net** - no later than **NOON on Sunday 20th January 2019**.



### **Notes from the Elders' Meeting held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

1. The Elders noted that the organisation of our church into a group of six remained 'fluid' as we await a final group constitution. There is a continuing discussion of organisational and financial arrangements for the group.
2. Sandy Ogilvie has confirmed that we are on the Durham Churches Trail website
3. The Elders thanked Freda Waller on her retirement, after many years, of managing the purchase and distribution of 'Reform' magazine. It was hoped that we would find a volunteer from our church to take on this responsibility.
4. Kath Ogilvie notified the Elders of the AGM of Waddington Street Centre on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November at 3 p.m. She will place the details on the notice board in the hall.
5. The Elders were given copies of the 'Stepwise for all of Life' programme devised by the URC. This will be discussed at a future meeting in conjunction with ideas for engaging new members to our church.
6. The Elders discussed arrangements for Christmas Eve and a future date was made for some Elders who are to meet to finalise these arrangements
7. Kath Ogilvie has purchased copies of a children's book called 'The Mystery of the New Noisy Neighbour', colouring Christmas cards and pens for children to use in the vestibule during services.
8. Kath Ogilvie will take the donations of Christmas Presents for The West End Refugees on the 5<sup>th</sup> December when she attends a meeting there.
9. The Elders agreed a final list of recipients for our Church Christmas cards.
10. Yvonne reported on Safeguarding procedures and DBS checks for all those who work with children or vulnerable adults in our church. The Elders are hoping to receive training in Safeguarding from Geraldine Sands from the Synod.
11. The Elders noted that The Food Bank is very happy with our premises and that they were seeking volunteers for Mondays and Fridays.
12. The Elders thanked Revd John Durell for his continuing support and advice in his role as our 'Pastoral Friend' during the period of vacancy and discussions on being part of a group of churches.

(Janet Thornborrow)

## The Missing Five Pound Note



Chippenham George worked for the Post Office and his job was to process all the mail that had illegible addresses. One day just before Christmas, a letter landed on his desk simply addressed in shaky handwriting: 'To God'. With no other clue on the envelope, George opened the letter and read:

**“Dear God,** I am an 93 year old widow living on the State pension. Yesterday someone stole my purse. It had £100 in it, which was all the money I had in the world and no pension due until after Christmas. Next week is Christmas and I had invited two of my friends over for Christmas lunch. Without that money, I have nothing to buy food with. I have no family to turn to, and you are my only hope. God; can you please help me?”

Chippenham George was really touched, and being kind hearted, he put a copy of the letter up on the staff notice board at the main Fareham sorting office where he worked. The letter touched the other postmen and they all dug into their pockets and had a whip round. Between them they raised £95. Using an officially franked Post Office envelope, they sent the cash on to the old lady, and for the rest of the day, all the workers felt a warm glow thinking of the nice thing they had done.

Christmas came and went. A few days later, another letter simply addressed to 'God' landed in the Sorting Office. Many of the postmen gathered around while George opened the letter. It read,  
**“Dear God,** How can I ever thank you enough for what you did for me? Because of your generosity, I was able to provide a lovely luncheon for my friends. We had a very nice day, and I told my friends of your wonderful gift - in fact we haven't gotten over it and even Father John, our parish priest, is beside himself with joy. By the way, there was £5 missing. I think it must have been those thieving fellows at the Post Office.”



George could not help musing on Oscar Wilde's quote: 'A good deed never goes unpunished!'



## Christmas is for Love -

Christmas is for love. It is for joy, for giving and sharing, for laughter, for reuniting with family and friends, for tinsel and brightly covered packages. But, mostly Christmas is for love. I had not believed this until a small elfin like pupil with wide innocent eyes and soft rosy cheeks gave me a wondrous gift one Christmas.

Matthew was a 10 year old orphan who lived with his aunt, a bitter, middle aged woman greatly annoyed with the burden of caring for her dead sister's son. She never failed to remind young Matthew, if it hadn't been for her generosity, he would be a vagrant, homeless waif. Still, with all the scolding and chilliness at home, he was a sweet and gentle child.



I had not noticed Matthew particularly until he began staying after class each day [at the risk of arousing his aunt's anger so I learned later] to help me straighten up the room. We did this quietly and comfortably, not speaking much, but enjoying the solitude of that hour of the day. When we did talk, Matthew spoke mostly of his mother. Though he was quite young when she died, he remembered a kind, gentle, loving woman who always spent time with him.

As Christmas drew near, however, Matthew failed to stay after school each day. I looked forward to his coming, and when the days passed and he continued to scamper hurriedly from the room after class, I stopped him one afternoon and asked him why he no longer helped me in the room. I told him how I had missed him, and his large brown eyes lit up eagerly as he replied, 'Did you really miss me?' I explained how he had been my best helper, 'I was making you a surprise,' he whispered confidentially. 'It's for Christmas.' With that, he became embarrassed and dashed from the room. He didn't stay after school any more after that.



Finally came the last school day before Christmas. Matthew crept slowly into the room late that afternoon with his hands concealing something behind his back. 'I have your present,' he said timidly when I looked up. 'I hope you like it.' He held out his hands, and there lying in his small palms was a tiny wooden box.

'It's beautiful, Matthew. Is there something in it?' I asked opening the top to look inside.

'Oh you can't see what's in it,' he replied, 'and you can't touch it, or taste it or feel it, but mother always said it makes you feel good all the time, warm on cold nights and safe when you're all alone.'

I gazed into the empty box. 'What is it, Matthew' I asked gently, 'that will make me feel so good?'

'It's love,' he whispered softly, 'and mother always said it's best when you give it away.' He turned and quietly left the room.

So now I keep a small box crudely made of scraps of wood on the piano in my living room and only smile when inquiring friends raise quizzical eyebrows when I explain to them **there is love in it.**





For the past 24 years, the Callas Family has developed a tradition of building a Christmas Village out of Department 56 collectable pieces. The village started out under their Christmas tree with a few selected pieces. Each year the collection grew. It has expanded into a platform that is 5 ½ feet wide and 22 feet long.

With over 800 trees, hand carved mountains, gondolas, skiers, trains, special lighting that was created and built specifically for the village, and Charles Dickens porcelain houses, the Callas family is known to be one of the world's leading collectors at this scale. The village is built every other year as it takes 6 weeks to construct. – And no two years look alike.



## OUT AND ABOUT WITH URCHIN



Your scribe wishes everyone the compliments of the season and will raise a glass of good malt whisky to everyone in the world at the beginning of 2019.

“We Three Kings of Orient are” is a carol we have sung since our childhood. It was composed around 1857 by Dr. J.H. Hopkins of Christ’s Church in the American town of Pennsylvania but who did Hopkins write about? These men appear in only the gospel of Matthew where they are called “Wise Men”. These men appear in Nativity plays, poems and carols and also on

Christmas cards. They have been featured in films and they have become some of the most recognisable people in the Christian culture. What do we know about these men who have come to be known as the Magi?

In the story in Matthew’s gospel, no number of them is given but the fact that the word used is plural must mean that there was more than one and, furthermore, they are described as “wise men”. The Greek word is translated as “wise men” but it seems that the word often meant Persian wise men who were interpreters of special signs, particularly such as astrological ones and there is no basis of their kingship. So who were they and why has tradition determined that they were three. The Bible says that there were three gifts; gold which is associated with kings, frankincense which is used in worship and myrrh which is used in the preparation of corpses; three gifts – three people.

Tradition says that there were three and they were named Caspar, Melchior and Belthasar, but other sources say their names were Hormizdar, Yazdegerd, and Perozdh, and again Hor, Basanter and Karsudan. Some accounts say that at least one had dark skin. Others portray Melchior as a dark-skinned African, Caspar as a fair-skinned European and Belthasar as an Asian. Matthew’s gospel tells nothing about their appearance. What he does say is that they came from the east and our knowledge of the ancient world is sufficient for us to believe that they came from Babylonia or Persia. But all we need to know is that there were three! It may be a misconception that the three wise men brought their gifts to the stable but in Matthew 2.11 it states that they visited Jesus in a house so the arrival of the Magi may have been later.

The Magi were guided to look for a new King by a miraculous stellar event which we know as the “Star of Bethlehem”. There had been seen an unusual new star in the sky which may have been a supernova or even a hypernova occurring in the Andromeda galaxy but it was enough for the Magi to pack their rucksacks, head for the camel station and get tickets for Bethlehem. Being learned men, they sought out the ruler of the area for information. He was Herod the Great and was a misogynist who had taken advantage of political unrest and he ended up at the top of the heap. He saw the Baby as being a threat so he decided to cunningly ask the Magi to tell him where the Babe was to be found so he too could worship. But the Magi were warned by God in a dream to avoid Herod so they took a different route home. Joseph also was warned by an angel to take Mary and Jesus and flee to Egypt. Herod was incensed and ordered that all male children under 2 should be killed which is in keeping with his already-stained character. The Magi were indeed Wise men!





### Christmas Acrostic

C - is for the Christ child  
 born upon this day  
 H - is for the holly  
 to make our mantle gay.  
 R - is for red ribbon  
 to wrap the parcels tight  
 I - is for the icicles  
 On this cold winter night.  
 S - is for dear Santa  
 Please leave him a treat  
 T - is for the turkey  
 It is so good to eat.  
 M - is for the manger  
 Where Baby Jesus lay,  
 A - is for the angels  
 On that first Christmas Day.  
 S - is for the stockings  
 Hanging in a row  
 With candy canes out of the top  
 And bulges in the toe.  
**MERRY CHRISTMAS!**



### Christmas Acrostic

C is for candle giving us light.  
 H is for holly with red berries bright.  
 R is for reindeer up and away  
 I is for icicles on Santa's big sleigh.  
 S is for Santa with presents for me.  
 T is for tree so pretty to see.  
 M is for Mary the Mother so mild.  
 A for the angel that sang for the child.  
 S is for the star that shone so bright.  
**MERRY CHRISTMAS** to all and to all a  
 good night!

### **Holly Berries**

Why are holly berries red?  
 And why is snow so white?  
 Why are spruce and pine so green?  
 And why are candles bright?  
 Can't you guess? It's Christmas time  
 When everything's aglow,  
 And loving hearts are full of cheer -  
 It's Christmas - don't you know?  
 What is in my stocking?  
 A present with a bow -  
 A candy cane, a tiny game,  
 An orange in the toe!





### **Legend Of The Christmas Rose**

Christmas is the season of giving gifts, thereby, showing love towards one another. This does not mean that the gifts are the sole expression of your love. No gift is costlier or more valuable than something that comes straight from the heart even if the gift in question is inconsequential. The tradition of gifts during Christmas originated from the kind gestures of the three Wise Men who brought expensive presents for the Infant Jesus to welcome him into this world. Since then, people have made gifts a mandate for Christmas. But, this must be remembered, as the legend of Christmas Rose will show you, that the gesture counts more than the gift. Perhaps, this legend originated just to teach people that, no matter what you gift, it must be from the heart and soul - even if the gift in question is just a flower. It is owing to this legend that the Christmas rose, the flower which only blooms during the chill of winter, has become an important part of Yuletide celebrations.

### **The Legend**

On a cold December night, everybody was coming to see their new Savior and brought Him all kinds of gifts and presents. The three Wise Men came in with their valuable gifts of myrrh, frankincense and gold and offered them to Baby Jesus. At that point, a shepherdess, Madelon, who had seen the wise men passing through, reached the door of the stable, to see the Child. However, being very poor and having brought nothing to offer to the child, she felt helpless and started weeping quietly at the sight of all the wonderful gifts that the Three Wise Men had got for the child. Earlier, she had searched, in vain, for flowers all over the countryside but there was not even a single bloom to be found in the bitter winter.

An angel outside the door was watching over her and knew about her fruitless search. He took pity on her and, when he saw her head drooped down in sorrow, decided to help her with a little miracle. He gently brushed aside the snow at her feet and where her tears had fallen, sprang a beautiful cluster of waxen white winter roses with pink tipped petals. Then he softly whispered into the shepherdess's ear that these Christmas roses are far more valuable than any myrrh, frankincense or gold, for they are pure and made of love. The maiden was pleasantly surprised when she heard those words and joyfully gathered the flowers and offered them to the Holy Infant, who, seeing that the gift was reared with tears of love, smiled at her with gratitude and satisfaction. Thus, the Christmas rose came to symbolize hope, love and all that is wonderful in this season.

**ROTAS - SUNDAYS - PREACHERS - DECEMBER 2018, JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2019**

<b>December 2018</b>	2nd Pauline James	9th Rev. John Durell <b>Communion</b>	16th Mr. Bill Offler	23rd Rev. Ruth Crofton	30th Rev. John Durell
<b>January 2019</b>	6th Dr. Mark Wilson	13th Frances Proud	20th Deacon Jane Middleton	27th Rev. Harold Stuteley	
<b>February 2019</b>	3rd Bernard Lee	10th Rev. Chris Beales	17th Mrs. Maranny Jones	24th Mrs. Jackie Haws	

**Christmas Eve service Monday 24th December – 6.30 p.m. Elders & Friends.**

Carols and Christmas service. Coffee, mince pies 6 p.m.

**Christmas Day service Tuesday 25th December – 10 a.m. (note time) – Revd. John Durell.**

**ELDERS AND DOOR DUTIES - DECEMBER 2018 AND JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2019**

	<u>ELDERS</u>	<u>DOOR DUTIES</u>
<b>December 2018</b>	2nd Mrs. J. Thornborrow 9th Mrs. K. Clasper 16th Mrs. H. Cockburn 23rd Mrs. D. Jackson 30th Mrs. J. Sarsfield	Mr. S. Ogilvie Mr. M. Reay Mrs. K. Clasper Mrs. W. Surtees Dr. M. Munro
<b>January 2019</b>	6th Mr. R. Todd 13th Mrs. Y. Melville 20th Mrs. K. Ogilvie 27th Mr. D. Shirer	Mrs. H. Todd Mrs. K. Clasper Mr. & Mrs. L. Thomson Mrs. H. Cockburn
<b>February 2019</b>	3rd Mrs. J. Thornborrow 10th Mrs. K. Clasper 17th Mrs. H. Cockburn 24th Mrs. D. Jackson	Mr. S. Ogilvie Mr. M. Reay Mrs. W. Surtees Miss B. Tinsley

If in doubt about your duties any Sunday, please check the list on the Vestibule notice board.

**Please remember** – You are responsible for arranging your own replacement.

ELDERS' MEETINGS (1st Wednesday of month) at 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY 5th December 2018.

Probably ...WEDNESDAY 9th January 2019

PROPERTY COMMITTEE (usually 3rd MONDAY of month) at 2 p.m.

But meet as arranged between the Committee Members

**FLOWER ROTA – DECEMBER 2018 and JANUARY and FEBRUARY 2019**  
**SUPERVISOR each month is Mrs. J. Graham**



**December 2018**

2nd Advent ring  
 9th Advent ring  
 16th Advent ring  
 23rd Advent ring  
 30th Christmas Flowers

**January 2019**

6th Mrs. Y. Melville  
 13th Mrs. J. Sarsfield  
 20th Mrs. J Sarsfield  
 27th Mrs. J. Sarsfield

**February 2019**

3rd Mrs. F. Waller  
 10th Mrs. K. Clasper  
 17th Mrs. D. Bramwell  
 24th Mrs. D. Jackson

To provide flowers where there is a Vacancy, or join the Flower Rota, or donate to the Flower Fund, please contact Mrs. Jean Graham.



**COFFEE ROTA – DECEMBER 2018 AND JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2019**

**December 2018**

2nd Fiona Bowater, Malcolm Reay  
 9th Fred Robinson, Margaret Munro  
 16th Janet Thornborrow, Judy Banister  
 23rd Heather Todd  
 30th Yvonne Melville, Jean Graham

**January 2019**

6th Kathleen Clasper, Barbara Tinsley  
 13th Win Surtees, Kath Ogilvie  
 20th Helen Cockburn, Lucille Thomson  
 27th Fred Robinson

**February 2019**

3rd Fiona Bowater, Malcolm Reay  
 10th Janet Thornborrow, Judy Banister  
 17th Heather Todd, Margaret Munro  
 24th Yvonne Melville, Jean Graham

Please decide and agree on who is responsible for bringing the milk.  
 You are responsible for arranging your own replacement.



## **Sanskrit Proverb**

Look to this day –  
For it is Life –  
The very life of Life.

In its brief course lie all –  
The realities and varieties of existence.

The bliss of Growth –  
The splendour of action –  
The glory of power.

For yesterday is but a dream –  
And tomorrow is only a vision.

But today well lived –  
Makes every yesterday a dream of happiness -  
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.

***A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR IN 2019  
TO ALL READERS OF THE REVIEW.***