

THE REVIEW

JULY 2020



SAINT HILDA AT HARTLEPOOL
(Painting by James Clark)

**WADDINGTON STREET UNITED REFORMED CHURCH,
DURHAM CITY DH1 4BG**

Church Website: www.durhamurc.org.uk



Dear friends,

At the time of writing this, a number of monuments or statues have been torn down, taken down, or earmarked for dismantling following anger at the injustices suffered by people based on their nationality or skin colour. A bronze likeness of 17th Century slave trader Edward Colston was dumped into Bristol harbour; in Poole, a sculpture of the founder of the Scout movement, Robert Baden-Powell, is under threat; and

a statue of British commander John Hamilton was taken down in response to Maori pressure in New Zealand.

I think public memorials can be divisive and unfair idols. Why is it that we immortalise some but not others; why the rich over the poor, winners over losers? Why make monuments at all? Against golden calves, images of kings, and memorials even at the moment of Transfiguration, God is definitely not a fan of statues. They violate the Second Commandment not to make an idol of any kind; and Jesus thought nothing of tearing down temple veneration through his death and rebuilding a new way of life through resurrection.

This is the moment to reassess our attachment to monuments in general. By putting up statues of the few we neglect the many whose contributions are overlooked. By tearing down those memorials we disagree with, we neglect the complexities and subtleties of history.

“The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there,” and just as it is wrong to judge someone based on their nationality or the colour of their skin, so too it is wrong to judge people of times past according to standards of times present.

I wrote in the last issue of the need for grace and forgiveness at this time. The same applies to our view of all that has been. Just as each of us now are doing the best we can in this moment of history, so too I reckon that the people of the past—the ordinary many as well as the extraordinary few—were trying to live as best they could within life as they knew it.

We might think we know better than those who are long gone but, long after us, future generations will be sure they know better than us. We would hope not to ourselves be condemned, so neither should we condemn.

It's best to do away with monuments altogether and concentrate on lives of grace, forgiveness, and love as God's people today. This living legacy that we leave to future generations is by far the best way to immortalise ourselves in history.

Regards,

Marcus

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY AND CHURCH NEWS

Ministerial Services – Revd. Marcus Hargis is contactable in the following ways:-

Phone: 0776 949 2629 and 0191 366 4930 (messages can be left on either).

Email: marcushargis@outlook.com For routine pastoral matters, please first approach your Elder.

Time of Sunday Services – 10.45 a.m. [Temporarily suspended.]

WEEKLY NOTICE SHEETS –

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

COPY DATE FOR THE AUGUST REVIEW IS – SUNDAY 19TH JULY 2020.

Please be aware when submitting articles that our Church Magazine goes on the website and is available for anyone anywhere in the world to read.



Mrs. Sylvia Welby ...

The Reverend Peter Welby has been a good friend of Waddington Street URC for some years now, both in occasional attendance at our Church and also in leading our service. Peter has also often led short services with prayers for healing on Thursdays associated with the Day Centre lunches. Sadly, his wife of 64 years, Sylvia, died recently. She had gone in for an operation but died the next day after the operation. We extend our deepest sympathy to Peter and his

family and remember him in our prayers. There is to be a Memorial Service for Sylvia at a later date, at St. John's Church, Neville's Cross.

(Heather Todd)

[A Sympathy Card was sent to Peter from our congregation.]



From St. Cuthbert's Hospice News for Volunteers:

“It's easy to make a buck. It's a lot tougher to make a difference.” – Tom Brokaw

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” – Winston Churchill

“Here's to all volunteers, those dedicated people who believe in all work and no pay.” – Robert Orben

“Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless.” –

Sherry Anderson

[St. Cuthbert's Hospice has recently launched its own Win Win Lottery and needs more subscribers.]
[Full details from the Hospice Office.]

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY AND CHURCH NEWS



HOPE FOR JUSTICE
Change lives. End slavery.

“ May 2020.

I hope you are all well. I wanted to write to thank you all at Waddington Street United Reformed Church for your recent donation (£4,000.00).

I have been speaking every day to our international teams in these unusual times and learning stories of freedom. Thanks to your donation we will be able to help more people find freedom from modern slavery and exploitation.

Thank you.

Tim Nelson. Hope for Justice.”



FOODBANK Appeal.

As many of you will know the Foodbank meets three times a week in our Church Hall at Waddington Street. It is well used and clients who are eligible can get food parcels and help with any issues they may have regarding housing or debt problems.

Coffees, teas and light refreshments are served and there is a friendly and supportive atmosphere.

However, during this lockdown period much has changed and the Foodbank are very grateful to still be able to use our premises even though offering a much reduced service. They strictly keep to the social distancing rules and hygiene requirements. No food or drinks are served and clients or their support workers are given a pre-packed box and then unfortunately discouraged from lingering on the premises. Not an ideal situation but the best that can be offered at the moment. This is a very well used service and due to the present situation and hardships will be needed even more over the coming months.

The Foodbank rent our premises at £150 a month to cover heating and lighting etc. As they are the only group using our premises at the moment it seemed unfair that their rental was the only one we were accepting when they really need all the support they can get. The Elders' meeting decided that we should give them a holiday rental at least until the end of 2020 and then review the situation. This will cost the church around £900 in lost rental.

The Elders are asking members to consider contributing to this shortfall in income by sending donations to Michèle, our Treasurer, marked **FOODBANK rental**. Any excess received will be given to the Foodbank who are extremely grateful for this offer of a rent free period.

Cheques should be made payable to Waddington Street URC and sent to:

Michèle Woods, 4 Hasting Avenue, Durham DH1 3QQ. Clearly marked **for Foodbank rental**.

Thank you in anticipation of your support.

Kath Ogilvie on behalf of the Elders.

HUMOUR from America:

While working for an organization that delivers lunches to elderly shut-ins, I used to take my 4 year-old daughter on my afternoon rounds. She was unfailingly intrigued by the various appliances of old age, particularly the canes, walkers and wheelchairs. One day I found her staring at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass. As I braced myself for the inevitable barrage of questions, she merely turned and whispered, “The tooth fairy will never believe this!”



EDITOR'S LETTER

DEAR READERS, *TRUE HEROES ...*

By coincidence, during the period of lockdown, I was reading a novel about a Plague Village in England which was based on a true story. Intrigued, I looked up the story on the Internet and it is abbreviated here. "On 1 November 1666 farm worker Abraham Morten gasped his final breath - the last of 260 people to die from bubonic plague in the remote Derbyshire village of Eyam. The plague in Eyam had begun 14 months earlier, with the arrival of a bale of cloth sent from London, where the disease had already killed thousands of inhabitants. Contained in the bale of damp cloth were fleas carrying the plague. A tailor's assistant called George Viccars became the first of the plague's victims in the village. 'That poor man was just visiting Eyam to help make clothes for Wakes Week [a religious festival] - and sadly never left,' said Eyam churchwarden Joan Plant, who has researched the story. Between September and December 1665, 42 villagers died and by the spring of 1666, many were on the verge of fleeing their homes and livelihoods to save themselves. It was at this point that the unpopular newly appointed rector, William Mompesson, intervened. Believing it his duty to prevent the plague spreading to nearby towns, he decided the village should be quarantined and enlisted the help of Stanley, the rector he had replaced. They devised a plan whereby no-one was allowed in or out of the village and the Earl of Devonshire would send food and supplies. Mompesson said if they agreed to stay - effectively choosing death - he would do everything in his power to alleviate their suffering and remain with them, telling them he was willing to sacrifice his own life rather than see nearby communities decimated. (His own wife later fell victim to the plague.)



August 1666 saw the highest number of victims, reaching a peak of five or six deaths a day. The number of cases fell in September and October, and by 1 November the disease had gone. The cordon had worked. During the outbreak, Eyam's mortality rate was higher than that suffered by the citizens of London as a result of the plague. In just over a year, 260 of the village's inhabitants, from no fewer than 76 different families, had died. Historians have placed the total population of Eyam at between 350 and 800 before the plague struck. However, Mompesson knew his actions, and the courage of his parishioners, had probably saved thousands more. He left Eyam in 1669 to work in Eakring, Nottinghamshire, but such was the reputation of the "plague village" he was forced to live in a hut in Rufford Park until the residents' fears had abated."

[Plague still is endemic in many countries, including in Madagascar, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Peru.]

I should be grateful if any contributions to The Review for August 2020 could be sent to me by the date given below.

Lucille Thomson

The next issue of The Review will be published on **Sunday 2nd August 2020**.
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 19th July 2020**.



Notes from the Elders' Meeting held on Wednesday 3rd June 2020

1. The meeting opened with a reading from a section of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians Chapter 1 followed by a prayer.
2. District reports were given with those mentioned to be remembered in prayer.
The meeting was informed of the arrangements for Doreen Bramwell's funeral. There will be a celebration of Doreen's life once our church re-opens. Marcus will send a prayer for elders and for distribution among the districts so that our church family can spiritually be together during the committal service.
3. We have received a letter of thanks from the charity 'Hope for Justice' for the £4000 given as a result of our fund raising activities.
4. We have received an email from Richard Frankhuizen a theology student from the Netherlands who had a period of internship in our church in 2016.
Richard stated that he is hoping to return to Durham soon.
5. The meeting noted that at the request of the Elders Les Thomson had signed the Terms of Settlement for Marcus.
6. We are grateful that David Shirer has organised several Zoom informal chat meetings for our church family. It was decided that 40 minutes free time was probably enough for general chat, but that Marcus would be able to provide longer sessions under his licence on the occasions when this might be needed.
7. The meeting agreed that Waddington Street Centre could make use of the sanctuary for group work when the Centre re-opened. This is a temporary measure.
It is assumed that there will be further discussion on cleaning and the extra hygiene standards required to counteract the virus.
8. The meeting accepted Kath's proposal that we support The Food Bank for the next 6 months. The rent for our premises is £150 per month and Kath suggested a 'rent holiday' until Christmas. This would cost our church £900 in income. It was agreed that this is a good cause to support while our fund raising activities are postponed.
A request for donations towards the total amount will be made via the next 'Review.'
9. The meeting continued in its discussion of the document published by the URC entitled "Ready for the New Normal".
Discussion centered on Part 2 – Resuming Activities
It was agreed that our church would remain closed for the foreseeable future as the infection rate remained high in the North East.
The meeting considered how a decision to open the church would be made; the practicalities of church meetings for decision making; different types of worship to be considered; the understanding and acceptance that both our church services and our church family will have changed over the period of closure.
The meeting noted the many positives gained from lockdown that will be continued in the future - for example many more people are making contact more regularly with each other.
10. The meeting discussed the current dilemma of making formal plans for our Christmas services, but that this would be considered as soon as was feasible.
11. The next elders' meeting will be Zoom on line on Wednesday 8th July 2020 at 7 p.m.

Janet Thornborrow



A Little Suggestion from Discussions on Lockdown and Re-opening

The May and June Elders' notes in 'The Review' mention that Marcus and the Elders have considered aspects of church life during lockdown and the re-opening of our church for worship and other activities.

We want our church to re-open for Sunday worship as soon as possible, after we have permission to do so, but our discussions revealed several points:

1. We have to be aware that we might not be able to re- open for some time.
2. Our post lockdown Sunday worship is expected to be markedly different in organisation, layout and content so as to comply with Covid-19 hygiene requirements and safety restrictions. These will impact on the number of people who can safely, physically attend our church and include for example safe procedures for entry and sitting in the sanctuary; the protection of the Elders and members of our church family on duty; safe collection of the offering; safe provision of music (singing is currently not recommended); safe distribution and collection of coffee and biscuits.
3. It was decided at the last Elders' meeting that it will take a further 6 weeks, (after we are given permission to open for Sunday worship) to prepare and organize for these new arrangements.

Despite these challenges our discussions highlighted the positives of lockdown. These included different formats of online worship such as 'Zoom' services with Marcus and others from the wider family of our group of churches; the worship of other denominations on Facebook, inspiring songs and videos on YouTube and Sunday Worship via the URC Daily Devotions website. Further, our church family have kept in regular contact with each other via phone calls and online chats. This has led to reinvigorated friendships and renewed links.

So we have a little suggestion ... another brilliant form of communication is by post. Whilst we can only meet virtually for fellowship, perhaps you would like to consider posting a short letter or post card to those in our church family that you used to see at Sunday services. It is a lovely way to show that we are all thinking and praying for each other.



DOING DISCIPLESHIP

- Part Two -

- THE TRAINING -

The call to discipleship is the call to an adventure in learning how to love as Christ first loves us; understanding how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. The syllabus does not lead to a qualification but in learning from Jesus we grow in our practice of what truly matters.

The message of Jesus is that all of God's law can be summarised in the command to love self, others and God with heart, soul, mind and strength. He was keen to remind people that the practice of love underpinned discipleship: "Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." (Jn 13:35 NLT)

Some may say, do we really need training in how to love? Love is such a universal, natural part of being human. Isn't it insulting to say that we need to learn how to love? In an ideal world this would be true: we would experience perfect love from others and, in turn, give the same to others. The fact is that, firstly, the world is not perfect and, secondly, the love of God goes beyond what comes naturally to us—for instance, in the command to love our enemies. Just as we exercise and train our muscles through use, so we also can improve our love-ability through focused practice.

So how did Jesus go about training his disciples. Firstly and fundamentally, discipleship was—and is—about listening. "As it is written in the Scriptures," said Jesus, "They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me." (Jn 6:45 NLT) The first disciples of Jesus had plenty of opportunity for conversation with Jesus, asking questions and hearing Jesus reply. Often the answer was in parables, concluded with the challenge: 'anyone with ears to hear should listen'. (e.g. Mt 13:9)

Listening is something we all can do: to each other (including those with whom we disagree), to ourselves, and to God. We learn from listening. But some are better at listening than others. It's a skill to be able to subdue the chatter within ourselves in order to truly listen. Many people 'listen' in order to jump in with their own opinion at the first opportunity. As George Bernard Shaw quipped, "The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." The solution is to listen.

Many times, Jesus expresses his exasperation that the disciples didn't get the point. They may have heard but they didn't truly listen. Even Peter the Rock, on a high after correctly proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah, fell back down to earth by not accepting that Jesus would have to suffer and die. Again, we hear Jesus' sharp tongue in rebuke (Mt 16:21-23).

So, communication—involving true listening—was the main method Jesus used in training his disciples. It can be the same with us. Honest talking and careful hearing are the foundation for learning, and for love. There is, of course, so much more that can be said on the subject. But the second principle of Jesus' training method is to get on with it, to 'just do it'—learning from practical experience.

"One day Jesus called together his twelve disciples and gave them power and authority to cast out all demons and to heal all diseases. Then he sent them out to tell everyone about the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick. 'Take nothing for your journey,' he instructed them. 'Don't take a walking stick,

a traveller's bag, food, money, or even a change of clothes. Wherever you go, stay in the same house until you leave town. And if a town refuses to welcome you, shake its dust from your feet as you leave to show that you have abandoned those people to their fate.' So they began their circuit of the villages, preaching the Good News and healing the sick." (Lk 9:1-6 NLT)

Travelling light, the Twelve Disciples were sent out to learn many things: how to depend on God; how to proclaim the message and back it up with healing action; how to discern where best to focus efforts; and when to move on. So successful was this method, Jesus extended the training to a wider group of seventy-two (Lk 10:1-12). The underlying principle is the same for us, even if the details will be different in our contexts: Jesus' method is to try things out for ourselves and see how things go. Moving on from something that does not work is not failure but a learning opportunity.

We can read and study and talk all we like about discipleship, learning and love. But before long (straight away, in fact) we're to get on with it and just do it. In the next part, we see that Jesus trusts his disciples to do just that.

Marcus Hargis

We Will Meet When the Danger is Over

Dear Friends,

As our nations start to ease the restrictions of lockdown there has been speculation, in the English press at least, about when churches and other religious buildings might reopen for private prayer and, eventually, corporate worship. The speculation has led to Elders and Ministers fielding questions about what might happen and when it might happen. The URC has put some very good resources out which, in sum, suggest a careful and cautious approach to both opening our buildings for private prayer and about returning to gathered worship. I've been discussing all this with the various Elderships I serve and, in many ways, we are trying to weigh up various risks - the risk of infection, illness and possible death alongside the risk of social isolation and missing traditional patterns of ministry, witness and service. There have been no easy answers and I've found it hard to fully articulate what I feel as I've been helping Elderships discern. This morning the Rev'd Martyn Coe, who serves our churches in Cumbria, posted a link to a new John Bell hymn which was used at an Iona Community event recently. John has written some very moving words which are sung by Alison Adam and accompanied by Ian McLarty. The song has been made freely available provided it is credited properly. The lyrics are powerful and express very powerfully what I have been feeling but not able to articulate: I hope you find this song useful too, with every good wish. **Andy Braunston.** [From URC Daily Devotions via Kath Ogilvie]

We Will Meet When the Danger Is Over

John L Bell (C) Wild Goose Resource Group, The Iona Community

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1.
We will meet when the danger is over,
we will meet when the sad days are over;
we will meet sitting closely together
and be glad our tomorrow has come.</p> | <p>3.
So let's make with each other a promise
that when we've all come through is behind,
we will share what we missed and find meaning
in the things that once troubled our mind.</p> |
| <p>2.
We will join to give thanks and sing gladly,
we will join to break bread and share wine;
and the peace that we pass to each other
will be more than a casual sign.</p> | <p>4.
Until then may we always discover
faith and love to determine our way.
That's our hope and God's will and our calling
for our lives and for every new day.</p> |

[Marcus has kindly sent these items from recent funeral services.]



Donald Mackay

In the stillness of this place we dwell in quiet contemplation,
in the presence of the Lord.
Our thoughts turn to Donald and, in what I say, memories will form.

We give thanks for these recollections and for Donald, the life that formed them.
And we rejoice that his life has made a new beginning with God, his story living in us.

Donald made an impression and his loss has left a dent in many lives.

We have here people who represent all that Donald Mackay considered most important: Church and charity.

There are many who would have wanted to be here but cannot—members from Waddington Street and the wider church; students for whom Donald had an affinity and who took him into their hearts; those from NEPACS who worked with him and benefited from Donald’s skill in fundraising.

Rather than tell you what you already know, I’m not going to deliver a eulogy as such—we’ll do that at a later memorial. But I’ll highlight various things and invite you to bring to mind the occasions and conversations you shared. In doing so, we give thanks to God for Donald Mackay and we rejoice that so much of what he worked on continues to this day and beyond.

We remember his commitment to excellence: his paperwork and reports to trustees, church meetings, and elders meetings; his correspondence and conversation with friends young and old, well-to-do as well as rough-round-the-edges. We give thanks for his clear communication and rejoice that it bore fruit in relationships and in fundraising success.

We bring to mind his strength of character, able to use his professional expertise as Appeals Officer for Finchale College to guide and steer NEPACS through its formative years; able also to tell of his love of God in leading worship, animating services with the stories of Maximus Mouse. We give thanks for Donald’s gift of communication and rejoice that so many remember his words.

I think we can also be honest and admit that there would have been times when Donald rubbed people up the wrong way. His excellence maybe left others behind. In seeking to help he might have given the impression of seeking control. But in these things, let us remember Donald’s desire was to contribute his skills, thanking God for his single-minded determination for the best and rejoicing in the results. For all that Donald was well organised in so much that he did, it is interesting that he didn’t arrange for every detail of this moment. Perhaps it is a sign that Donald recognised that whatever we did, inspired by him, we all would do a good job.

He also trusted in the welcoming love of God and one of his requests were that we read, alongside Psalm 23, these words from John’s gospel (John 14: 1-6):-

“Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. 2 There is more than enough room in my Father’s home.[a] If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? [b] 3 When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. 4 And you know the way to where I am going.” 5 “No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?” 6 Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.

Through the Holy Spirit we are joined by a great cloud of witnesses; those who have followed, are following, and will follow the way to true life. We not confined to one place and era but united across time and space. Donald continues as one of those witnesses, though now no longer with us on earth.



Doreen Bramwell

(Mrs. Doreen Bramwell died on Thursday 28th May 2020 in University Hospital of North Durham, she was 92 years old.)

God has planted a seed of eternity within us, and Doreen grew it in the garden of her life into patient commitment, a willingness to help, and skills with needlecraft—evidenced in her quilting and banner making. So, I found the following Bible reading which is highly appropriate, even though not one of the usual readings heard at funerals. The context is that Moses was being instructed by God in all the laws and rules which the people of God were to follow for their benefit in building the new nation of Israel. A special tent, a tabernacle, was to be constructed as a moveable place of worship. And so, Exodus 35: 25-35 reads: “All the women who were skilled in sewing and spinning prepared blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine linen cloth. All the women who were willing used their skills to spin the goat hair into yarn. The leaders brought onyx stones and the special

gemstones to be set in the ephod and the priest’s chestpiece. They also brought spices and olive oil for the light, the anointing oil, and the fragrant incense. So the people of Israel—every man and woman who was eager to help in the work the Lord had given them through Moses—brought their gifts and gave them freely to the Lord.”

Doreen is one such woman who brought her gifts and gave them freely to the Lord. I am saddened that I was unable to truly meet Doreen, though her banners at church made an impression on me and I know that Jim is comforted that there will always be a part of his mother there. Indeed, I have spoken with family and friends instead to get to know Doreen before today.

Of course, she was more than just what she did. What matters is who she was: her contributions matter and so does her character. Kind, gentle, considerate—Doreen was not one for the centre stage or limelight, she just got on with life. She got on with the job of raising her two sons, Jim and John; she got on with life even after the sudden death of her husband Dennis; she got on with jobs that needed to be done—at home and at church.

Doreen made the most of her garden, nurturing life. It was perhaps the realisation that she would not be able to care for her garden as she would like that lead to her decision to move to Camsell Court for her last years. But before then, she nurtured and cared for her family, enjoying travel and cruises with them; she educated and cared for many hundreds of children through her work as a primary school teacher; and she fed and cared also for successive generations of tame blackbirds. Wherever she lived, the blackbirds followed Doreen who delighted in feeding them, as well as other birds. But she had a particular affinity with the blackbirds who were as much a part of her life, as was her love of quilting and banner making.

I’m told that many members have items stitched by Doreen in use in their homes. She was part of the Fundraising Committee of the Church and contributed her well-made items towards sales for many years until failing eyesight meant Doreen couldn’t keep up her high standards. Also a member of the Durham Quilting Group, she exhibited and won prizes. Her needlework was very much part of her life, as was family and work and garden.

To conclude, I think the writer of the book of Exodus had people like Doreen very much in mind when they spoke of those who carefully used their practical skills in making things of beauty that speak of the beauty and care of God. There are those who stand front of stage; and there are those who support backstage. Doreen was one of those who did what she could, without making a fuss: she got on with life.

Dear URC friends,

It is my pleasure to write to you after a long time when our paths separated. First of all, I want to give my sincere condolence for the loss of Donald Mackay. He was one of the kindest persons I have ever met in my entire life. To be honest, I only have good memories of him. He always had a listening ear for everyone, even for an extremely talkative person like me. What I especially will miss are the good conversations and prayers we had. These activities were of course strengthened by many cups of English tea and delicious biscuits. Thank you, Donald, for being for all of us such a kind and warm-hearted person. I strongly long for the moment when we will meet again.



Now I want to talk a bit about what happened to me after our paths separated. After finishing my Theology course, I searched for a job in the field of Theology. This seemed almost impossible to find, which led me to work for 6 months in Bulgaria, which is a beautiful country having a diverse and splendid natural beauty. Another benefit is that going out

for food and drinks is quite cheap, and most of the people are friendly. In my opinion, a good country to spend your vacation. (Photographer: Mariana Dicheva)



Eventually, I felt that the Lord called me back to the Netherlands to continue in architecture. Recently I finished my Master's Degree at the Technical University of Eindhoven. For a later magazine, I can write more

about my Master's Thesis, which is in many respects deeply connected with your wonderful country. Currently, I am reading and studying a lot and am searching for a proper job. I have good hope for this, however, things got a bit delayed because of the present situation we are in. Many things I can still say but for now I want to show my gratitude towards all of you. It was phenomenal how kindly you treated me in Durham. (Facebook page: Mariana Dicheva Photography)

The topic of this meditation will be about a vital aspect of life - namely **friendships**. When you read Mark 2:1-5 you can notice a remarkable story. It shows us the importance of having excellent friends.

[Looking at the common houses in this area, we notice flat roofs which possess stone staircases on the outside of the building.]



After Jesus finished His preaching tour He came back home. Even at His home, the crowds followed Jesus since they were in love with His words. This large group of people obstructed the four friends and the paralytic from reaching Jesus. These friends loved their friend so much they needed to be persistent and creative in order to help him. Suddenly, they got an idea - if

there is no opening to come to Jesus, one must be made. Here active faith is displayed – even obstacles won't stop them, even if it has the size of a roof, **it must and will be removed**.

Can you imagine the reaction of the people underneath the roof who got waste and dirt on their heads? These unlucky people were probably the most eloquent persons of the community, which sat nearest to Jesus.

Visualising this picture can be funny, even not speaking of what the owner of the house must have thought when he saw his roof being demolished. I think that none of us would have liked to have this happen to us. This was not a small tiny mouse hole but a huge hole by which an entire bed came through! Finally, the man was lowered at the feet of Jesus. He stopped preaching and was not offended that the roof removers stopped His important oration. No, He saw their faith and said to the paralytic, 'Son (Gk. *Teknon*), your sins are forgiven' (2:5). Last but not least, the man got more than forgiveness that day as Jesus also healed him (2:11-12).

What I personally love about this story is that we can do so much for others who, like the paralytic, cannot help themselves. By allowing me to follow an internship at your church you became in some sense like the four friends that lifted me through the roof of the theological study - thank you so much for that.

Lastly, I also want to point once more to Donald - a friend of many and a man that helped numerous persons in need. By his life, actions and, last but not least, his fundraising for Nepacs, I am wondering how many persons our dear friend has lifted through the roof towards great blessings by his actions and faith.

Richard Frankhuizen

Source - James R. Edwards, The Gospel according to Mark
(Pillar New Testament Commentary, La Vergne: IVP.

CROSSWORD ... Barbara Tinsley has kindly compiled and sent in this Crossword for us to enjoy.

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40										41		

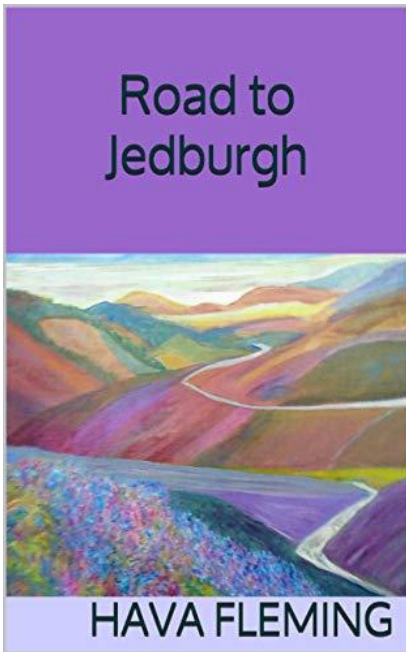
ACROSS

1. A dying art in these days of emails?(13) 7. Useful for hanging out washing.(3)
 9. A decree.(4) 11. I think therefore I --.(2) 13. Apres ---.(3)
 15. In these troubled times we have to stay --.(2) 16. A skilful lady may be found ? a cloth.(12)
 21. Therefore.(4) 23. Kind of lettuce.(3) 24. --- West.(3) 25. Art gallery.(4)
 27. Horror novel.(2) 28. Where its --.(2) 30. Exclamation.(2)
 31. Initials of Royal Society.(2) 32. Rose pigment.(6) 35. Snow sport.(3)
 36 Consumed.(3) 37. --- Stewart. (3) 38. "Madness" music. (3)
 39. Prepare food. (4) 40. Good way to contact loved ones. (5) 41. Her Majesty.(2)

DOWN

1. Volcanic emission.(4) 2. For drawing water,.(3) 3. Oval food.(3) 4. Canine activity.(13)
 5. Pale brown colour.(3) 6. What we have to be careful about these days.(12) 8. --- and flow.(3)
 10. What we can do to keep our spirits up.(4) 12. Myself.(2) 13. Whatever!(2)
 14. The hidden self.((2) 17. We could occupy our self with this knotty pastime!(7)
 18. After all our exertions we need a ----.(4) 19. To pass the time we could ---- a book.(4)
 20. Anger.(3) 22. These little shapes will make a nice picture eventually!(7)
 26. Listen with this.(3) 27. Annoy.(3) 29. Informal Thank You.(2)
 33. Short Doctor(2). 34. "What's up ---"? Said Bugs Bunny.(3) 35. Wise person or herb.(4)
 38. Glad that I live am I That the --- is blue (hymn). (3)

	R	E		Y		G		E	P	Y	K	S
E		G		K	O	O	C					W
D		A	K	S		D	O	R		E	T	V
I	K	S			R	E	D	D	A	M		S
S	R				A	H			T	A		G
L	I		D		E	T	A	T		R		I
U		E	A	M		G		S	O	C		J
O	G	R	E			N		E		A		
G	N	I	R	E	D	I	O	R	B	M	E	
N	I				I	K	S		B		M	A
I	S	I	N			L		G	E	P		V
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Book Review –

“Road to Jedburgh” by Hava Fleming

Waddington Street members will recall the liberal Jewish congregation led by Hava and Bill Fleming, who made use of our premises for two or three years. Opportunities for us to work more closely together were curtailed when they ceased to meet in the North East; and soon after that sadly Bill died.

Hava meanwhile moved to be with her family in Switzerland, where recently the pressures of lockdown led her to resume an earlier writing career. In “Road to Jedburgh” she weaves two stories from the late 13th century: one concerning a Jewish family trying to flee from York to Edinburgh following Edward I’s expulsion of the Jews from England, and the other concerning two branches of the same Reiver family, the Kerrs or Kers. (Was spelling really so significant 700 years ago? – I can hardly believe it!)

It’s easy to find other anachronisms as you read on. The telescope the sea captain looks through on his way across the North Sea was three centuries from being invented; and the scene in which Penina explains the meaning of anti-semitism to her daughter is not only clunky (children’s lessons often seem to be aimed at us), but oblivious to the fact that the term was first used only in 1879. But of course the prejudice and hatred of the Jews which is at the heart of Hava’s story was real enough: Edward’s edict of 1290 came exactly a century after the horror of the massacre at Clifford’s Tower in which up to 150 members of the York Jewish community lost their lives.

Penina’s husband Jacob never makes it to the border: the same hatred and prejudice lead to his death in a prison next to the Tyne Bridge. And the rest of the family never get as far Edinburgh, but through the kindness of strangers are able to make a new life for themselves in Jedburgh. Whether there is any historical basis for this contrast in attitudes either side of the border I have no idea, but Hava’s depiction of the warm hospitality the family receives will no doubt find approval among certain members of our congregation.

I suppose “Road to Jedburgh” would be described as historical romance, which is not a genre that I would normally turn to. But lockdown challenges us all to try new experiences. In an undemanding way this double story may give us cause to think about anti-semitism not just as a piece of history, but as a deeply troubling phenomenon in our world today – and one which to our shame springs clearly out of our own Christian heritage. I do regret that circumstances prevented our getting to know our Jewish friends better: clearly Hava and Bill would have been great teachers and enablers.

But Hava’s writing may still have a part to play. She can tell a good story, and tell it with passion – and though this is not the kind of book I am likely to turn to again, I was left caring about the people in the story, which is more than you get sometimes from well established authors. So give it a try – if you have a Kindle you can download it for only 81p.

John Durell

(Hava in the Hebrew language means “life”.)

Lottie’s Gems ... Did you know ...?

1. In the 90’s, almost 30,000 rubber ducks 🦆 were lost at sea and are still being found today!
2. A single strand of spaghetti is called a spaghetti.
3. Scotland has more than 400 words and descriptions for snow!
4. Sperm whales have best friends!
5. Baby elephants suck on their trunks like baby humans suck on their thumb.
6. If abandoned, squirrel babies can be adopted by other adult squirrels. 🐿
7. Crocodiles can’t stick their tongue out.



He Will Guide ...

If you love and trust the Lord,
And depend upon His Word,
He will shower you with His love,
Countless blessings from above.

In Him you can confide,
Precious Counsellor and Guide,
He's the Life, the Truth, the Way,
Into perfect, perfect day.

He has marked a path for you,
If you keep His Cross in view,
If you trust His living power,
He will guide you hour by hour.

Then after life is done,
Comes the setting of the sun,
Thank God it doesn't end the story,
Afterward He will receive you into glory.

[From "Great and Precious Promises" by Dorothy Anderson]

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[Inspired by Psalm 73:24]