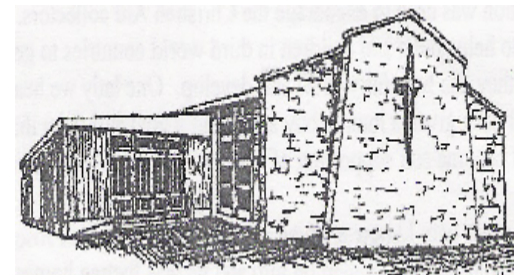



Holy Trinity
Christmas Coffee Morning
Saturday December 1st
10 a.m. - 12 noon
Stais Village Hall Mince pies Raffle

The Messenger

December, January & February '07—'08 No 19



Churches Together in Cowling



Praying for the people of Cowling each week

Please let us know of any prayer requests.

W.b.

- | | |
|--------|---|
| Dec 2 | Sun St, Manor Park, Fold Lane |
| Dec 9 | Woodland St, Gibb St, Queen Square |
| Dec 16 | Park Road, Scar View, Royd St |
| Dec 23 | Acre Meadow, Laycock Fields, all homes on Keighley Rd & Colne Rd |
| Dec 30 | Pinnacle View, Old Oakworth Rd & outlying homesteads |
| Jan 6 | Winkholme, Middleton, Ickornshaw, Nan Scar, Park Lane, Lumb Lane |
| Jan 13 | Stone Head Lane, Warley Wisw Lane & surrounding dwellings
Sandyforth Lane, Reedshaw Moss |
| Jan 20 | Lane Ends Estate, Wainman's Close, Bannister Walk, Dick Lane, Earl
Crag View, Old Saw Mill, Lane Ends Lane and farms |
| Jan 27 | Cowling Hill Lane, Tom Lane & outlying areas |
| Feb 3 | Low Lane (Norwood), Long Lane & all surrounding dwellings |
| Feb 10 | Collinge Road, Lingcrag Gardens, Mill Croft |
| Feb 17 | Springwell Close, Green St. Hartley Place, Spring Gardens, Walton St,
Cross St. Queen St |

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 Also available on Cowling Web.*



Dear all,

When I took my dogs for a walk last week I admired the trees which were showing off their beautiful colours. Today I noticed that the leaves had fallen creating a soft carpet. The air this morning was crisp, a sign that winter is approaching fast. Advent is just around the corner.

I love Advent and Christmas, the excitement, the celebrations, the hope, the new beginnings surrounding the arrival of our Saviour. During this time I often reflect in my readings on Mary's Song of Praise in Luke's Gospel (Luke 1:46-56). Every year I am moved by Mary's humility: 'My heart praises the Lord; my soul is glad because of God my Saviour'. Mary lived for God. She honoured God's grace through cheerfulness in adversity and praise. This does not mean that Mary found her cure in the art of positive thinking. Positive thinking is good, but if it overrides true feelings of fear, anger and worry it can become destructive. According to Luke's Gospel Mary was deeply troubled when the angel spoke to her announcing that she would become pregnant with the Son of God. Bravely Mary faced her distress first and then coped through total trust in God. Mary's faith, obedience and humility are still such an inspiration for us today.

The shelves in the shops are filling up with Christmas cards and all sorts of treats for the Christmas season. For many the real treat, the true gift, Jesus, is unknown. For many the words freedom and love mean very little. I pray that together we can make a difference this Christmas. Making a difference in society always starts with us. I encourage you to draw closer than ever before to Jesus during this Advent season, put your hand in His and then perhaps you will be able to say 'my heart praises the Lord; my soul is glad because of God my Saviour'.

Enjoy the coming season in the knowledge that God deeply loves each one of us.

With love
Charlotte

Caesar Augustus and Herod the Great sought to advance their own political careers, but it is never God's will that an individual or a nation use injustice to advance their agenda. The message of the scriptures is that no matter how brutal and unjust the methods of the powers, God will continue to achieve God's plan for us.

Imagine the risks of being pregnant under the occupation. Caesar made his decree, and so Mary and Joseph had to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Many other pregnant women as well as Mary would have been making similar journeys. And if the delivery was premature and the mother and child died en route, Caesar would not have cared in the least. The Israeli military occupation of the West Bank likewise places its own interests above the needs of the people under its control. Numerous mothers, whose labour has already begun have been held up at checkpoints, some have given birth in the open fields or in their cars. Mary gave birth in a distant community, far away from the traditional midwife support that families usually provide. It was occupation that made it necessary for the birth of Jesus to be in crude circumstances with the numerous risks of birth in a stable or cave among the animals. And we should remember that both in Mary and Joseph's day and in ours, there is a mysterious God-sent challenge to imperial power in every pregnancy-the power of love and new life works outside the restrictions of occupation.

Luke informs us that the census required people to return to their place of origin. Joseph was from Bethlehem, and so Mary and Joseph needed to make this journey. The disruption in the lives of people will have been enormous. The purpose was to consolidate the power of the Roman authorities, and there was no regard for the human cost to its citizens. Today, travel is again a major issue in the occupation. Today, travel in and out of Bethlehem is controlled by checkpoints in this monstrous 27 foot high wall that snakes across the West Bank. Checkpoints similar to international border terminals channels control access in and out of Bethlehem. The Israeli government has made special arrangements for tourists, so that their inconvenience will be minimal, but most Palestinians find their travel severely restricted even in the case of medical emergencies. They need special permits even to travel the five miles to Jerusalem. Many residents of Bethlehem have not been able to visit Jerusalem for years.

May your reflections and meditations on the Nativity story, help you find a bond of solidarity with the countless people throughout the world whose lives are controlled by powers that have little regard for their well-being.

Christian Peacemaker Teams is an ecumenical initiative to support violence reduction efforts around the world.

CPT ideas for cribs this year

* When building the wall around your crib this year build a wall encircling the crib, with no one or nothing else in view. Perhaps leave Mary and Joseph outside the wall, separated from the crib (they certainly would have difficulty entering Bethlehem from Nazareth today!) Or perhaps have the shepherds and wise men separated from the baby Jesus by the wall.

* Create as the Holy Spirit leads your family, small group, or church! Remember, in prayer and reflection, the Palestinian communities, Christian and Muslim, who are unable to travel because of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories.

St Andrew's Toy Service

Christmas is a time to think of those less fortunate than ourselves and we hope you will be generous in your giving to our Christmas events. As usual the Christmas Day collection will go to support the work NCH, the National Children's Charity. NCH is the leading UK provider of family and community centres, children's services in rural areas, services for disabled children and their families, and services for young people leaving care.

On December 9th we hold our annual Toy Service. Please bring gifts of new or good quality used toys which will be distributed by the Salvation Army to children living nearby who need our support to make their Christmas a happy one.



At the same service we will be giving out the annual JMA awards to children who have collected for Missions throughout the year. Two fifth of the money collected supports the needy in the UK and three fifths supports work in hospitals, schools, agriculture etc in the third world. Our thanks to all who give.

Palestine: No Way to the Inn--Bethlehem behind the Wall By Lorne Friesen of the Christian Peacemaker Team in Hebron

The Gospels of both Matthew and Luke tell the nativity story, and both authors make it abundantly clear that Jesus was born under the Roman occupation. According to some, the whole world was at peace; it was called "Pax Romana". Occupation, then as well as now, meant that the powerful ruler had such a stranglehold upon the citizens that it controlled almost every aspect of life for those under its domination. Both Luke and Matthew have the courage to refer in their stories of Jesus' birth to the hardships that were part of life in Judea and Galilee.

Luke informs us that the occupation required Mary and Joseph to make a long and dangerous journey to satisfy the dictates of the Occupying Power. Matthew tells us that all infant boys born near the place and time of Jesus' birth were slaughtered, for Herod to preserve the power that was given him by the Roman authorities.

Unfortunately, the circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus have often turned into a fairy tale that misses the point of the gospel. The gospel accounts give dramatic evidence that in spite of the best efforts of the political powers at securing their own position, God continues to move.

Mary



Mary, wellspring of peace
Model of strength
Model of gentleness
Model of trust

Model of courage
Model of patience
Model of risk
Model of openness
Model of perseverance

Woman of mercy
Woman of faith
Woman of contemplation
Woman of vision

Woman of grace
Woman of truth
Woman pregnant with hope
WOMAN CENTRED ON GOD

(Author unknown)

St Andrew's
Friday January 18th
Ceilidh
Watch out for local adverts

News from the last CDFC meeting.



Christmas Pageant. at 4 p.m. on 16th December. A really exciting event is planned, including Inns, “a stable”, shepherds watching their flocks, a donkey, wise men with horses, and an epic cast. Arrangements are in hand but more people are needed. CDFC needs **YOU**

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 21st - 25th January 2008.

DATE	HOST	VENUE	TIME
Mon 21 Jan	Mary Clough	Braidagarth, Baxter Wood	12.00 noon
Tues 22 Jan	Anne Sollberger	31, The Hawthorns	12.30 pm
Wed 23 Jan	St Peter's Church	St Peter's Church	9.30 am
Thurs 24 Jan	Sue Hargreaves	18 Beanlands Drive	7.30 pm
Fri 25 Jan	Joan Ayres	13, Beech Street	12.00 noon

Trying to make sense of non-sense over 60 years

How I began

As many of you know I first arrived in Palestine in 1944, not long after my first birthday, and spent most of the next 5 years living in Jerusalem. We lived in a flat in St George's which was in Palestine till 1948 and then in Jordan and during our time there we were evacuated to Amman, to Cyprus, to Beirut and once, after the bombing of the King David Hotel in 1946, back to London. I don't remember anything about arriving in Palestine or the first couple of years; I am told I used to pray “Lead us not into Tel Aviv Station ...” I do remember more later - particularly the explosions and gun fire which still make me hate fireworks or sudden bangs and gave me nightmares for much of my later childhood and adolescence.

I am pretty sure that the experience of living through the fighting before and through 1948 has marked me in all sorts of ways. I feel the need to return more and more and to continue to try and make sense of what happened then and is happening now. So I am recently back from a Sabeel witness visit, the fourth in

What's on?

Holy Trinity

1st Sunday Holy Communion (Traditional) at 9.30 Without music
2nd Sunday All Age Service at 9.30 With music
3rd Sunday Holy Communion (Modern) at 9.30 With music
Alternating with St Andrew's
3rd Sunday at St Andrew's at 10.30
4th Sunday Holy Communion (Modern) at 9.30 Without music
5th Sunday Joint benefice service rotating between Cowling (9.30), Sutton (10.30) and Lothersdale (10.00 a.m.)
Mothers Union
 First Monday of the month at 7.30
Christmas Coffee Morning
 1st December 10 a.m.—12 noon
 Village hall

St Andrew's

All Age Worship every Sunday at 10.30
 3rd Sunday with Holy Trinity see below
Prayer group 1st & 3rd Tues 9.30
Coffee Morning Fridays 10.00—11.00
Regnal Tuesdays 2.15 Bancroft Room
Choir Thursday 7 p.m.
Toy Service & JMA awards
 Sun 9th December 10.30 a.m.
 Toys to be received by Chris Bown, Salvation Army organiser for Christmas toy distribution

Joint Services and Activities

Starting Tues Nov 29th
 Advent Bible studies in the Bancroft Room SA

Dec 16th

9.30 Joint service at Holy Trinity

Dec 23rd

4 pm Carol service with Christingles at St Andrew's
 Followed by mince pies

Dec 24th Christmas Eve

11.30 p.m. Midnight mass at Holy Trinity

Dec 25th Christmas Day

10.30 a.m. Family service at St Andrew's

Jan 20th

10.30 Joint service at St Andrew's

Feb 17th

9.30 Joint service at Holy Trinity



Organ Recital

Instead of the Autumn Rendezvous usually held on the first Saturday in November, this year we decided to have an Organ Recital. The starting time of 11 am was perhaps a little early. There were three or four visitors at the beginning, but more turned up as time went by. We had a rota of five organists who played for approximately 45 minutes each with 5 minutes allowed for the "change over". This took us to a finishing time of 3 p.m. The choice of pieces played was varied and on the whole not too much duplication occurred although the Queen of Sheba arrived twice. The last session closed with a short time of community hymn singing. Our sincere thanks go to Philip Boocock, John Taylor, Ken Brook, Edward Scott and Susan Watkiss who made up the team.

We had a number of people who came to see the exhibition which had been set up in the hall. Pictures relating to places of worship now closed were on display along with portraits of past ministers at Bar Chapel. Joan Tindale provided many good quality photos and some literature from the Moonrakers archives. On sale at lunchtime was a choice of home made soups and sandwiches.

Proceeds raised for Church funds amounted to £315 and thanks are extended to all who helped with this event.

Correction

In the last issue of the Messenger our soloist at the Songs of Praise Imogen Cummings was incorrectly named. My apologies!

Stop press

Sadly thieves have just been at work stripping lead from the roof of Holy Trinity and causing thousands of pounds worth of damage.

3 years and was disturbed to find the facts on the ground changing more and more rapidly - almost by the minute. (Sabeel is an ecumenical liberation theology centre based in Jerusalem and Nazareth.)

How it was this year

Along with 60 others I spent 10 days seeing some of the facts on the ground. As well as visiting the traditional pilgrimage sites in Galilee and staying in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth, we went to places less visited by pilgrims and tourists.

Ramadan was ending as we arrived so Jerusalem was particularly busy then and for the Eid holiday. Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Nazareth were fuller of pilgrims than for many years which was encouraging. However not many stay overnight in Bethlehem or even in Palestinian East Jerusalem - which is very rapidly being taken over by Israel. Few meet with the living stones, the forgotten faithful who are the Palestinian Christians.

We heard from experts - UN officials, peace makers, people of faith and workers for justice. We saw the complicated maps - layer on layer of occupation over the years and then drove the roads, saw the encroaching settlements, went through the checkpoints and kept seeing "the separation barrier" often a wall and sometimes a fence but always on Palestinian, not Israeli land. The checkpoints are unbelievable - more intimidating on each visit - especially the Bethlehem one. Pilgrims, tourists and Israelis sail through in their cars fairly easily but for Palestinians it is another matter all together - they queue for hours each day to get through the turnstiles and caged tunnels to get to the airport style check in before they get off to work. More and more roads in the West Bank, ie on Palestinian land, are restricted to Israeli Settlers and tourists only. The Palestinians are discriminated against at every turn - even in rubbish collection!

We heard from Israelis and Palestinians, from Christians, Muslims and Jews and saw things for ourselves and heard people's painful and often frightening experiences. We found ourselves on a sort of emotional roller coaster - moved in all sorts of ways, often rather rapidly swinging from despair to hope, from anger to calm confidence and back again.

The question I am left with after my latest trip to Palestine/Israel is one I also faced in the 80s when visiting South Africa - how do I/we make sense of non-sense. What keeps me going now is the knowledge that even though everything seemed so hopeless then the situation did change - as it has in Ireland and other places. Also the people we met were inspiring and committed to establishing a just peace.

Bridget Rees

Remembering Music at Ickornshaw and a Dear Friend

In April a very dear pal of mine passed away. I have known Alice Smith for almost fifty years. She was a very talented lady: kind, witty, sincere in every way and a true believer in God and the hereafter. She told me many times that she was looking forward to seeing Clifford and her Mum and Dad again.

We spoke each week, if not in person then on long telephone calls. (My wife said that we could "talk for England.") At the conclusion of each conversation we used to say "it's lovely to talk to someone who remembers".

Alice's passion was for music, as you know. She and her sister, Mamie, were instrumental in the revival of the Oratorio in the late fifties, sixties and seventies. She produced Hadyn's 'Creation' in 1959 after a request from Nurse Alice Smith. The majority of the choir did not know the work and after a few rehearsals a number of Church Trustees, who were painting the church at the time, were heard to say, "They'll never make it." Of course they made it and went on to produce 'Messiah', 'Hymn of Praise', 'Samson', 'Judas' and of course Alice's favourite, 'Elijah'. Choir anniversary was the time for these performances – the third Sunday in May.

At the 1969 performance of 'Elijah', John Lawrenson (Friday Night is Music Night) was engaged to sing the lead. Alice said that his fee was £200 but in her indomitable style she negotiated a reasonable fee ('as we are only a very poor Chapel in Yorkshire – unaware of Saddlers Wells fees') of £50. Notices were published, adverts were inserted and all seats in the church were taken. (Alice recalled that 'even the free sittings were full and some of the congregation were sitting on the steps in the gallery'.) Lawrenson enjoyed a hearty tea provided by Ella and Holmes Gott at Nan House – a treat indeed!

The organ at Ickornshaw had been replaced in 1908. Laycock and Banister had designed a tubular pneumatic (toccata action) pipe organ which was blown by a water turbine. The instrument was magnificent. My Great Uncle Watson Dawson (married my Grandma's sister Helena) was invited to play the organ in 1910, a post he occupied until 1955. Helena was an excellent Contralto and sat on Watson's right hand at all times. (She could occasionally be a little ferocious – lovely but beware!!)

Alice said that although *she* was the conductor Helena would occasionally take matters into her own hands where Watson was concerned, sometimes saying, "You will have to do it again!!" Do it again he did!! He was a lovely person. He had qualified as an Associate of the Royal College of Music and had a Licentiate with the London College of Music. He retired as a designer from Hartley's Mill and became a confectioner producing home-made bread, pastries and cakes – Alice recalled that 'his currant teacakes were beautiful'. In the evenings he taught the piano. He was very nervous at 'big dos' Alice recalled.

She used to listen to him practise after services and choir rehearsals. In 1946 he was practising a new toccata and Alice said it was really lovely but he was too nervous to play the piece on 'Feast Sunday' and the item was dropped – what a shame !!

Alice asked me to track down the organ from Ickornshaw and see if we could hear it for one last time. Using the Internet I located the instrument in the Catholic Church of St Vincent de Paul in Hull. My son and I met Father White and we arranged a visit for a number of Ickornshaw stalwarts. Grace Smith came with us and gave us a lovely recital. The event was recorded and is still available on compact disc.

I introduced Alice to the Internet and many times she came to our house to 'surf the net'. She enjoyed visiting the old photographs on Cowling Web so much that I encouraged her to install our old computer in Fold Lane but she decided that she was not young enough!! Alice would have been fine.

Alice asked me to find John Rawnsley – a baritone of some repute. John had sung the 1975 Christmas 'Messiah' at Ickornshaw and was engaged to sing the lead in 'Elijah' in the following May, which of course was part of the Centenary celebrations. John, John's father and his uncle visited her in February and said that he would be unable to sing as he had an audition at Glynebourne. Alice was devastated but agreed that he couldn't turn down such an opportunity. (I think that year three principals had to be replaced.) John Rawnsley's web site was very informative and within a day or two John had rung Alice and they spoke of past times and friends for two hours. John had been brought up in the East Lancashire Circuit and, of course Alice being involved with the Colne Music Festival, they both knew parents, relations, friends and associates. John agreed to sing at an Autumn Concert at St Andrew's to help repair the roof and Alice managed to fill the church almost to capacity – a congregation rarely seen at St Andrew's before. Incidentally John was singing 'Il Pagliacci' in Hanoi only three days earlier.

John and his wife Nuala stayed with us briefly in February and of course Alice came for dinner. John and Nuala gave Imogen Cummings (who sang so beautifully with Edna at the Harvest this year) a Master Class that day and an evening of merriment was enjoyed by all.

On leaving the following morning John took me to one side and said, "Don't let the next time I come up here be for Alice's funeral."

John's last visit to us was to pay tribute to Alice at the service of thanksgiving following her funeral by singing her favourite 'Lord God of Abraham' from 'Elijah'.

Howard Benson