

*The*  
***Messenger***

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October 2015

**Saltaire United Reformed Church**



Photo credit: Helen O'Loan

Welcome to our church:  
a place of worship and of  
community.



## *An Adventure in India*

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Our services are children-friendly, with a **Sunday School** for very young children and their carers, which starts after the first 20 minutes of the service.

**Coffee and Tea** are served after each Sunday service in the downstairs rooms. **Please do join us.**

If you wish to discuss a **wedding or christening**, please see one of the authorized persons at the front desk after a Sunday service.

Like many people, one of my earliest memories is of my first day at school, and in particular meeting my friend Ara Dhanani. Ara was born in London, but her parents were from Delhi, in India.

During the school holidays, I liked to spend time in Ara's home, as it was an interesting house, complete with a prayer room, and a beautiful fragrance, of what I now know to be Jasmine, that wafted through each room. I remember being happy to be invited to eat meals with Ara and her family, as the meals that her Mother Gita cooked were incredibly colourful, and tasted delicious.

Ara's Grandfather, Altaz, lived a few streets away from Ara's home, and he would often visit. I remember being fascinated by all of the stories that Altaz shared about his homeland, and slowly, but surely, in listening to the adventures of Altaz, I fell in love with a country that I yearned to visit.

I saved my pocket money, and bought a map of India, that lived on my bedroom wall until I left home. I read so much about India as a child growing up that, on reflection, I can now see that I spent a significant part of my childhood dreaming of a time when I would be able to travel to India, and to explore the country for myself.

During the first year of my training for ministry, I learned that there would be an opportunity to gain some valuable experience working in one of the developing countries across the world, through The Council for World Mission. The Council for World Mission, is a partnership of thirty-one churches, working together to further God's mission in the world, which the United Reformed Church is a part of. All ordinand's were given a list of countries, and many mission projects, in order to choose from, and while it seemed a difficult choice for many, my decision had been made many years before, when the seeds of interest, and fascination had been sown about India. I decided to visit the Church Of North India, and my host was the very wonderful, Bishop Bunu Samantaroy.

The night before I left England, I had all kinds of thoughts in my mind, as for the first time throughout all of the planning, it dawned on me how far away I would be from everything that was familiar to me. I also thought a great deal about the ways in which I might change, and how I might view my own corner of the world on my

return.

Early the following morning, I waved goodbye to my family and some friends who had gathered to support me. Letting go of my son Nathaniel's hand was one of the most difficult things I had ever done up to that point in my life.

I embarked upon a journey that would involve two flights and a long bus ride. I finally arrived at the Alexandria Mission School compound in Amritsar in the middle of the night, and I was so pleased to be made so welcome by Pulak, an ordinand, who expressed in various ways how much the Lord had blessed the school over the years with people wanting to work in the mission field.

After a simple meal, I was shown to a tiny house that was to be my home for the next two months. Pulak advised me to get as much sleep as possible, as the year six students were very excited to meet their new teacher. After Pulak had left, I forgot all about the advice to keep my torch close by, as there are regular electricity problems in India. Although I was feeling quite tired, my mind was filled with all kinds of things. I thought about my family back home in England, and I missed them terribly, but I was also filled with great anticipation of some of the things that I might experience. Within that moment, I remember sitting on my bed, and as I glanced around the room I looked upwards, and to my horror the whole wooden structure of the ceiling was covered in large Gecko's that appeared to be fighting. I was filled with so much fear, and just at that point the small generator that was providing electricity grinded to a noisy halt, and I was plunged into darkness.

I had spent most of my life completely terrified of spiders, and all manner of bugs, and in the hours that followed all I could do was pray to God to keep me safe. It was a long night sitting on the edge of that bed as I eagerly awaited the sunrise, but once the new day arrived, the school compound garden was the most magnificent sight to behold.

I was so fortunate to spend two months teaching English and Drama in the Alexandria Mission School in Amritsar, as each day the children appeared so grateful that they had been given an opportunity to have an education. It was also a delight to work alongside such a dedicated and inspiring group of teachers.

After leaving the mission school in Amritsar, I travelled on the famous Kalka Shimla railway to Shimla, the capital city of the northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh, nestled in the foothills of the Himalayas. In 1864, Shimla became the summer capital of British India, and the headquarters of the British army serving in India. It was in Shimla that I experienced a month working in a challenging, but interesting rural ministry.

Upon leaving the congregation in Shimla, I went on to visit some of the many mission projects in the hill stations of the Himalayas, and I gained so much from working with an amazing group of women who pick tea leaves for a living. This particular group of 'tea

pickers' were at the time being supported by one of the many UK Christian Fair Trade sponsored mission houses that work within the area of Himachal Pradesh.

I discovered that tea picking is not as easy as it looks, and the days were often long and exhausting from the heat. During the two weeks of tea picking, I followed the routine of the women, and by 3.45 am we were on the road travelling to work. After walking for more than an hour the working day began between 4.30 and 4.45 am, and depending on the heat the working day ended around 2pm in the afternoon.

As we picked the tea leaves each day, the women shared stories of how their lives had been dramatically changed since they had signed their fair trade contract. I received so much in the company of the strong, and hardworking 'tea ladies', and learned many songs from famous Bollywood movies, and on the cooler days, during the allotted mid-morning breakfast break, I also learned some of the classic Indian dance moves.

However, in the everyday exchange of our cultures, I also had an opportunity to teach the women some songs, and music from the West. I also recall times when we prayed together, and sang hymns on that hillside, complete with panoramic views of the like that I had not seen before.

After bidding my fellow tea picking ladies a tearful farewell, I journeyed down the hill stations to a women's clinic in Kangara. It would be very difficult to forget that first morning working as a chaplain, in what is an extremely busy rural gynecological clinic. I remember both the excitement and the anxiety experienced by the vast number of pregnant women that I met that day, and in the following weeks. Throughout that first mission to India, I visited many hospitals and clinic facilities, and I remember making a promise to myself, and to God, that I would try to not criticise the National Health Service, that I now believe we are so blessed and fortunate to have in the UK.

As I made the long journey down through the hill stations, I felt sad to be leaving the Himalayas, but after what seemed like a long time away from my family, I was more than ready and eager to return home. I had learned so much about how God was working in the lives of the people that I had met, and I was deeply inspired by all of the people who are so dedicated to work in the many mission projects. I also firmly believe that my experience of India served to greatly strengthen my relationship with God and affirmed my calling.

I have journeyed back and forth to India over the years, and I have been so blessed to be able to revisit some of the mission projects that I first visited as an ordinand. I have along the way made some lifelong friends, and there is no doubt in my mind that I will continue to be drawn back to the mission field nestled within the communities across India.

With love in Christ Jesus,

Rev. Caroline Andrews

## *Diary for October 2015*

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>
Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup>	11am – 1pm	Decorating the Church for Harvest – all help appreciated.
Sun 4 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Harvest Festival & Communion Service led by Rev. Caroline Andrews. Organist: Mr Geoffrey Popple.
	12 noon	Faith lunch (all are welcome).
Tue 6 <sup>th</sup>	1pm	Bible Study in downstairs rooms.
	7.30pm	Elders' Meeting.
Thurs 8 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	Bible Study in downstairs rooms.
Sun 11 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Family Service led by Mrs Valerie Jenkins. Organist: Mr Howard Hutchinson.
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Family Service led by Rev. Caroline Andrews. Organist: Mr Geoff Collins.
Sat 24 <sup>th</sup>	3pm	Wedding of Ben Parkin and Kate Woolmore.
Sun 25 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Family Service led by Rev. Caroline Andrews. Organist: Mr Geoffrey Popple.
	12 noon	Messenger deadline for November's edition.
Sat 31 <sup>st</sup>	5.30pm	Fellowship of Light. Entertainment and Faith tea.

## *Regular Church Activities*

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<b>SUN</b>	10.30am Service:  1pm–4pm	1 <sup>st</sup> – Communion 2 <sup>nd</sup> – Scout Groups' Parade 3 <sup>rd</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> – Family Services  Church & cafe open to the public (all year)
<b>MON</b>	1.30–3pm  7–8.30pm	Toddlers' Praise Time  Bell ringing practice
<b>TUE</b>	7-7.30pm  7.30pm	Prayer meeting for the Church and Saltaire  Elders' meeting (meets 1 <sup>st</sup> Tue in the month)
<b>WED</b>	6-9pm	5 <sup>th</sup> Shipley Scout Groups' meetings
<b>SAT</b>	10.30am	Under 40's Group (meets 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sat of each month)

The church is open to visitors 2pm-4pm Monday to Friday from April to September.

**Please join in!** New group members are assured a warm welcome.

Bell ringing contacts:	Len Morris	01274 597894
	Robert Appleby	01274 223753
Scout contact:	Barbara Lawson	01274 591931
Under 40's contact:	Leona Holland	07522 106912
Toddlers' group contact:	Valerie Jenkins	01274 542510
	Helen O'Loan	01274 405847

### **The Windhover by Gerald Manley Hopkins**

I caught this morning, morning's minion,  
Kingdom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn-Falcon, in his riding.  
Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and striding-night there.

How he rung upon the rein of a wimpling-wing.  
In his ecstasy! Then off, off forth on a swing,  
as a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend!  
The hurl and gliding rebuffered the big wind.

My heart in hiding stirred for a bird- the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!  
Brute beauty and valour and act, oh air, pride, plume here buckle!  
And the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion times told lovelier, more dangerous,  
O, my chevalier!

No wonder of it: sheer plod makes plough down sillion shine, and blue-bleak embers,  
Ah, my dear, fall, gall themselves, and gash gold vermilion.

## *Thanks & Notices*

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### **COPPERS APPEAL 2015**

I am pleased to tell you that the amount donated towards this appeal currently stands at £378. There seems to have been even more demands on our finances this year and so I am sure our Treasurer will appreciate any amount we can raise, through this appeal, for our Restoration Fund. If you have been hoarding your coppers and loose change, now is the time to start handing them in please.

Very many thanks to our loyal, regular contributors.

*Pauline Sleight.*

### **JAM JARS FOR COMMUNITY ACTION NEPAL**

I'm still collecting empty jam jars for making my marmalade , so please bring them to church and I'll collect them.

*Tony Wilson*

### **SHIPLEY CHURCHES TOGETHER**

The Bible stall at the Shipley Market will continue to give free Bibles to all will be held on Monday the 5th of October, and Monday the 19th of October from 10.30am to 4pm  
Come and support this important Bible Mission!

### **BIBLE STUDY**

This month Rev. Caroline Andrews will begin leading a series of Bible studies on some of the books of the Old Testament, beginning with the book of Job. Come, and enjoy an afternoon, or an evening studying the Bible in a relaxed environment, and grow further in our faith, and understanding of God's word.

Please find Bible Study dates, meeting time, and place below:

**Tuesday 6th of October at 1pm**, the group will meet in one of the downstairs rooms of the church, and embark on a journey in studying one of the oldest books of the Hebrew Bible, (the Old Testament).

The **SAME** Bible study will also be held on Thursday evenings, and will begin on

**Thursday the 8th of October at 7.30pm**. The Thursday evening group will meet in one of the downstairs rooms of the church.

### **AN EVENING WITH GEM ANDREWS BAND**

Rev. Caroline Andrews' daughter Gem, and her band, are pleased to have an opportunity to offer an evening of live music from the new album, 'Vancouver' that has been released in 2015.

Come along to Saltire United Reformed Church on Wednesday the 28th of October at 7.30pm.

## *Forget about God, and stick to the facts!*

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When Emily Sturgess started her course on Biological Sciences at Oxford University she was greeted by the following statement:

“Everything in Biology will only be explained by evolution. So put away your foolish ideas about God and we’ll do some real science”.

Emily had been a practising Christian for a few years and found her new environment very challenging to her Christian faith.

Emily struggled between the two beliefs of the Religion of God, and the Religion of Evolution. Her first year was very difficult as she felt she was the only Christian Biology student and that did not change during her five years of study. Emily continued her studies at Imperial College, and gained a PhD in Cambridge before becoming a full time lecturer at Oxford.

Emily also continued her Christian journey, and she wrote a number of articles about her faith. In a booklet that Emily had prepared, and written for school children she wrote: “Most scientists who are Christians believe that God chose to create everything by a process of evolution. He was active in the whole evolutionary process, and continues to sustain the world now”.

Emily has contributed one chapter in the recently published book “Christians and Evolution’. The other contributors are all scientists, many of them Professors in various branches of science. Each scientist talks about their own Christian faith journey and it is not necessary to be a scientist to appreciate their story.

However, if you are a scientist then the first chapter, “in the beginning God” would seem to be a good starting point. This is a book where you can look at the chapter headings, and choose whichever looks interesting. If your children or grandchildren are scientifically inclined then this is a good book to have on your shelves. “Christians, and Evolution” is edited by Professor RJ Berry, published by Monarch Books, and available to buy on Amazon.

*A review by Marshal Wood*



The Harvest Festival has long been considered an integral part of almost every culture within our world. It is an ancient tradition that allows all people to celebrate the harvest that nature has brought forth.

In the Jewish tradition, the festival of 'Sukkot', or the 'Feast of Tabernacles', is a joyous occasion to give thanks, and praise to the source of creation for the great gifts of food that sustain, and nourish God's people. Within the Jewish celebration of the harvest festival, some Jewish families erect a wooden unroofed hut known as the 'Sukkah', in which to host the harvest festival meal. It is a reminder of the temporary wooden structure which their Jewish ancestors are said to have lived in during their forty-year journey through the desert after the exodus from Egypt. Farmers in the Middle East still construct this kind of temporary wooden structure at the edges of their fields today, as many farmers sleep in the hut the night before the harvesting of the crops.

Abraham Lincoln declared 'Thanksgiving' a national holiday in 1863. Today, 'Thanksgiving' is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November each year across America. The harvest celebration in America originated around the time of the Protestant Reformation, and there are many paintings which depict the first 'Thanksgiving' for the harvest at the Plymouth plantation, where the pilgrim settlers, and Native Americans shared a celebratory feast of their first harvest, which included fresh vegetables, and wild turkey.

The celebration of the Harvest Festival in Britain dates back to pre-Christian times, when the success of the harvest dominated the lives of the people.

The Saxon farmers offered the first cut sheaf of corn to one of their many God's of fertility, as it was thought that this ritual would ensure a bountiful harvest the following year. A plaited corn dolly was made from the last sheaf of corn, which symbolised the 'goddess of the grain' and was placed on the feasting table to remind the people that the spirit of creation was among the people.

Such harvest festival traditions continued a long time after Christianity arrived in Britain.

However, the tradition of celebrating the harvest festival in churches began in 1843, when the Reverend Robert Hawker invited his large congregation in Morwenstow, Cornwall, to a service to celebrate the harvesting of the crops. This later led to the

tradition of 'dressing' churches with flowers, and fresh home grown vegetables in preparation for the Sunday service in mid to late September.

This year as a church we will celebrate the harvest festival on Sunday the 4th of October during the morning worship, and afterwards in the sharing of a meal together. We will continue to donate dried goods to 'Jubilee Outreach Yorkshire', a local charity in Shipley, and to the Bradford Food Bank.



## **5<sup>th</sup> Shipley Scout Group**

**Saltaire United Reformed Church**

**Meet on Wednesdays in the Church Rooms**

**Group Scout Leader: Linda Malloy**

**Beaver Scouts – age 6 to 8 years**  
**6pm to 7pm. BSL: Linda Malloy**

**Cub Scouts – age 8 to 10½ years**  
**6pm to 7.30pm. CSL: Jennifer Williamson**

**Scouts – age 10½ to 14 years**  
**7.15pm to 9pm. SL: Neil Holmes**

**Explorer Scouts – age 14 to 18**  
**8pm to 9.30pm. ESL: Zac Williamson**

**For further information contact**  
**Barbara Lawson 01274 591931**

*'Andrews all but freezes time,  
so wonderful are her lyrics,  
arrangement, and delivery  
-The Americana UK'*

*'An outstanding album  
-No Depression Magazine'*

## **Gem Andrews Band NORTHERN TOUR DATES**

**28<sup>th</sup> Oct – Saltaire URC  
Yorkshire**

**29<sup>th</sup> Oct – Homotopia Festival  
Camp and Furnace, Liverpool**

**30<sup>th</sup> Oct – Live Theatre,  
Newcastle upon Tyne**

**1<sup>st</sup> November – The Angel Inn,  
Corbridge, Northumberland**

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**NEW ALBUM 'VANCOUVER'  
OUT NOW**