

**Kelbrook Vicarage,  
Barnoldswick BB18 6TQ  
Tel. 01282 841607  
E-mail: [not@noprobblem.no](mailto:not@noprobblem.no)**

For the past ten Christmases we've sat in our house in Norway at this time of year and tried not to write endlessly about the deep snow, ridiculous temperatures, frozen sea and all the other wintery things around us. This year it's all different. We're sitting in our house on the Lancashire/Yorkshire border, wondering how to start a letter when the sun is shining on the green fields outside.

At the end of July we packed up the house in Innfjorden (no small job!) and set off for Kelbrook, which is a little village in open countryside just outside Skipton. The people have been very welcoming and friendly, and the village is lovely, too. The house is big (and a bit draughty after Norwegian houses) and we're busy sweeping chimneys (some of them haven't been done since the 1930s) and decorating the guest room this weekend!



On 1 August Tracy and Tim both started new jobs. Tracy's work in Kelbrook parish involves visiting, leading various groups, taking certain services and contributing to most of the others, and all other kinds of pastoral activities. On top of full-time theology study in Nottingham this is quite some workload! That Tim can still work full time for a university in Tromsø while living in Kelbrook is a marvel of modern technology! Research is, of course, a large part of the job, as is collaboration with various European universities in setting up a joint teaching programme. But weekly seminars with students in Tromsø happen over the internet — a scheme which is working very well.

The three older children are coming to terms with a new place (Thomas complained that "it looks silly without mountains"), new friends (and missing old ones in Norway) and a new language (school work suddenly in English rather than Norwegian). They're all coping very well. Beth (12) has settled very well in her new school. After Norway it is an entirely new experience for her to have four cousins in the school (one in the same class)! She's playing the flute in a local orchestra, has adopted a horse at a local rescue centre, and is taking Meg (the dog) to dog-training classes. Matthew (10) and Tom (7) are both going to the excellent primary school in Kelbrook, and both enjoying it in their different ways. They've been involved in the school's Christmas presentation this week; Tom as 2<sup>nd</sup> King in a nativity play, and Matthew as a red indian (not a nativity play). For Matthew it's his last year there before secondary school, so he's got a lot to do. Arriving as we did in the summer, Matthew was immediately introduced to cricket (unknown in Norway) and he's looking forward to next summer so he can try again. Tom has also had to learn to read in English and has thrown himself into it with great enthusiasm. He's also having piano lessons, and both are having swimming lessons at the local pool in Barnoldswick. Katie (nearly 2) is small but a big character. Not easily intimidated, she plays happily with all sizes of children, and keeps us constantly amused.

The fifth family member is a dog called Meg. She was homeless and depressed, but is now a gloriously happy and affectionate mongrel. We had planned to bring our dog Sandy with us from Norway, but due to last-minute complications with the regulations he was adopted by another family there. It was hard to leave him after all these years, but then, leaving Norway and our friends was a great wrench as a whole.

All in all, it's been a year of surprises (at Easter we'd never even heard of Kelbrook) but a year of great promise and excitement. It will be thrilling to see what next year brings.