

Group News



**** Dec 2018 * Jan 2019****

The monthly magazine for:

Guisborough URC

56 Westgate, Guisborough, TS14 6AY: Church Secretary 01287 637273

Redcar URC

Station Road, Redcar, TS10 1RQ: Contact 07742 720 090 .

St Andrew's URC, Nunthorpe and Marton

Cypress Road, Marton, TS7 8PD: Church Secretary 01642 550854

Part of the URC Northern Synod – www.unc-northernsynod.org.uk

www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk

HAPPY CHRISTMAS



As we approach the seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, it seems an appropriate time to stop and take stock of our spiritual well-being.

some people have said that there could have been no more opportune moment for the coming of Jesus than the time God actually chose. The Roman empire, they argue, brought unparalleled peace and stability, an opportunity to travel as never before and an mixing of cultures that brought an openness to new ideas; just the sort of world in which the gospel could quickly spread. It's an argument that is tempting, but for me it doesn't work, - for the fact is that there are many other times in history for which an equally strong case could be made. If Jesus had come today, for example, how much more of an impact might He have made? Using modern technology He could have relayed His message around the world in seconds. Instead of preaching to small crowds on hillsides, He could have addressed whole nations live by satellite. Surely, if any era qualifies for the label, 'the best time for the message', it would be the 21st Century.

Yet God didn't choose this or any other date we might suggest, - He chose that day in the reign of the Emperor Augustus, when Mary and Joseph had gone to Bethlehem to be taxed. Why then? What was so special about that particular time? Well, the truth is that we just don't know, because we don't know how God's mind works. His timing is of His choosing, - no-one else's!

There's a lesson here for all of us, not just concerning the birth of Christ, but the whole of life. We may wonder sometimes why our prayers are not answered as quickly as we would like. Equally we might find that God is calling us to grasp the moment, when we want to hang back, reluctant to commit ourselves.

The coming season of Advent, and after the joys of Christmas, the season of Epiphany serve to remind us that God's timetable and ours are probably not the same; and as we begin to take stock of our spiritual journey maybe it's time that we asked ourselves whether we are prepared to put His timing first.

Blessings

Jan

Synod Prayers

2nd December: Advent as we prepare for Christmas PCM and the work of Mozambique Council of Churches Independent Churches Representative, Dr Mark Bonnington

9th December: The work of Ministries and Development Committee and its convenor, Revd Hilary Collinson; St Columba's URC, North Shields; St Andrew's URC, Monkseaton; Revd Dr Matthew Pre-vett; Human Rights Day (10th)

16th December: Stamfordham LEP (Methodist/URC), Revd Harold Stuteley (Methodist); Bellingham LEP (Methodist/URC); Falstone & Kielder URC; Wark LEP (Methodist/URC); Deacon Anne Taylor (Methodist)

23rd December: St. John the Evangelist LEP (Anglican/Baptist/Methodist/URC), Kingston Park, Newcastle
Christmas Worship across the synod;

30th December: PCM, their retired ministers and those newly appointed to posts with PCM Northern Divisional Salvation Army Commanders, Majors Denis and Olive Lomax

Holy Habits – Book Club

The next meeting of the Holy Habits Book Club will take place at Marton Church on Thursday 10th January at 7.15pm.

We will be discussing the chapters on Service and Gladness & Generosity. As well as looking at the chapters themselves we will also be looking at the bible passages suggested, so it would be helpful if you could look at them prior to the session.

You don't need to have attended the previous meeting to come along to this session. If you would like more information please give me a ring on 01287 654 093.

Susan Griffiths

Guisborough

Over the years many people have tried to encourage me to follow daily Bible readings. They have given me copies of Daily Bread, exhorted me from the pulpit to read my Bible every day, but none of it has worked. Then the URC started to send a daily Bible reading, reflection and prayer to my email inbox every morning. Suddenly it is no longer an effort. I wake up, pick up my iPad mini, and check my emails. I am quite disappointed if I have to be up early and I miss it, returning to look again later in the day.

Recently we have been running through the stories of Samuel, Saul and David. These stories tackle some meaty issues such as the problem with Kings, the consequences of mental illness and paranoia, and the healing power of music. Also by following the story, it stops us avoiding those parts of the Bible we feel uncomfortable with. The tales of battles fought, the Philistines put to the sword and the killing of the priests at Saul's command in his jealousy and madness. There are so many lessons to learn in these tales of time long past. On Sundays we have had some respite while following the psalms and there too we find ourselves identifying with the emotions and longings of people writing thousands of years ago.

In the run up to Advent the daily readings are linked to newer Advent hymns that are perhaps not so familiar to us. The first one was not so new. "Hills of the North rejoice" is very familiar to me, as we sang it at school. It always seemed so appropriate to be singing this hymn in Hexham surrounded by the Northumberland hills. Some of the words have been altered in modern versions as it is no longer considered appropriate to describe the "isles of the Southern Seas" as "unvisited, unblest". The final verse still creates a wonderful picture as people come together from all the points of the compass to worship God and find rest with Jesus.

I have also joined the Holy Habits book club this autumn. As I am

Guisborough Calendar

Weekly

Thursdays 9.30am – 11.30am Market Day Coffee Morning
Thursdays 11.30am **Quiet Time in Church.**
Prayers and reflections with
Maureen, Madge, Ken and oth-
ers. Details on church notice
board

**Guisborough Church
looks forward to
welcoming the Group
to a short service for
Christmas Morning
at 10.00am with
Revds Ken and Margaret
Harris.**

writing this, the second meeting is tonight. We will be discussing breaking bread and eating together as acts of discipleship. The season in Daily Devotions of Advent hymns is leading us into the run up to Christmas and this episode of Group News will take us from the beginning of the Church year into a new calendar year. Holy Habits suggests Christmas as a time to practice Eating Together as a Holy Habit and an opportunity to invite others to “Come and see that the Lord is good”. I know many churches will already have plans in place, but there is still time to include others outside our churches in our celebrations. Perhaps we can remind them that “Jesus is the reason for the Season”.

Whatever your plans I wish you all a Blessed Christmas and a Healthy and Hopeful New Year. May we be such faithful disciples, so filled with the love of Christ that others are drawn to hear our story, and the stories that inspire us, as we walk the way of Jesus.

Donna Moore

	Vestry	Communion	Door	Flowers
2nd Dec	J Basham	J Reynolds	The children	
9th Dec	D Beattie		J Basham	The ladies
16th Dec	M Burrows		M Ward	
23th Dec	M Houston		P Etwell	The ladies
30th Dec	R Tunncliffe		D Houston	The ladies
6th Jan	P Etwell	B Ward	M Houston	See new sheet
13th Jan	D Moore		J Reynolds	
20th Jan	S Verrill		D Thompson	
27th Jan	J Reynolds		B Ward	

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18th – 25th January 2019

Church services to be held as follows:
Booklets as well as web downloads to be available.

Sunday 20th January - 6.15pm
Unity Service at Guisborough Methodist

Monday 21st January - 12 noon
Salvation Army midday [This will be day 1 from the booklet]

Tuesday 22nd January - 12 noon
St Nicholas

Wednesday 23rd January - 12 noon
St Paulinus

Thursday 24th January - 12 noon
URC Guisborough midday [Day 4 from the booklet]

Friday 25th January - 12 noon
Guisborough Christian Fellowship hosted by Methodist Church

Redcar

Church Bazaar

A huge thank you to all who donated, helped and supported this very successful day. We had a lovely day, helped with glorious weather and supported by many friends in the town. The crafts people always seem to enjoy the day, many have asked to be included in next years event!! Both groups of people made lovely comments about the fellowship and atmosphere in the hall which means a great deal to us. The event raised an amazing £860 – THANK YOU!!

Redcar Calendar

Sat 8th December Memorial Service
Mon 10th December 6.30pm Scout District Carol Service
Mon 17th December Christingle Service

Weekly

Wednesday 10.30am Singing Group
Thursday 9.30am Prayers
 10.00-11.30am Pop-In for refreshments and chat
 1.45pm Prayers at Catherine's

Date	Door	Vestry	Communion
2 nd December	Brenda	Catherine	
9 th December	Margaret	June	
16 th December	Brian	Elaine	
23 rd December	Norma	Catherine	
30 th December	Krysia	June	
6 th January	Brenda	Elaine	June

This is Our World

Apparently, this is the time to stop and think about the wonders of Creation.

There are many. Fresh life in jungles and in the oceans is still being found.

But the blue dot world which we are in is rare in the vastness of space.

Noise pollution, light pollution which hides the Milky Way and global warming with its threat to the Arctic animals. These need to be thought about and acted upon, by those who stop, think and care. Work for Christians and for others in positions of responsibility.

John Crowther

Phone Assault

A recent newspaper article was headed; ‘How mobiles are eating our mealtime chat’.

This is because most young people have a habit which is becoming almost an addiction to check their mobile phones for messages. The ‘You Gov’ report says that 55% of those surveyed did this with 2% less also doing this when dining out.

The upper limit for leaving the device alone before a worry sets in is two days. So public health is being affected and the late Prof. Stephen Hawkins’ view that technology may become our master is being strengthened.

Heads used to be bowed mainly in prayer or briefly in an act of respect to our friends or to God.

My favourite long ago television advert showed a person enjoying a tranquil holiday in Scotland. Then his mobile phone rings, ‘SPLASH.’ He’s thrown it in to the loch!

We just have a ‘land-line,’ wheels it has not – it is not mobile. Similarly there is no such thing as a mo-ped, you can only pedal antique ones.

John Crowther

St Andrew's

Christmas Social

The Christmas Social is to be held on Wednesday 19th December at 7.30pm.

There will be carols, quiz etc. with coffee, tea and mince pies. Proceeds from raffle will be donated to Christian Aid.

Do come along and join in the entertainment.

Toy Service

Correction to the item in last months Group News. Wrapping paper is NOT required when you bring your toys to our service on 9th December. However the Salvation Army are hoping to give each family, as well as toys, a meal for Christmas so would also appreciate tinned food, Christmas cake, mince pies etc. plus selection boxes.

Shoe Box Appeal

Shona, Eleanor and Joan would like to thank everyone who generously donated money, items, filled boxes and knitted hats and scarves. We sent 62 boxes to the collection point. Also thanks to those who delivered them. Many thanks to you all.

Flower Rota

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for being so supportive regarding the 2018 Flower Rota. All spaces for the year were filled for which I am extremely grateful.

Joan Swan

Coffee for Charity

28th Oct	Teesside Hospice	£14.00
4th Nov	NE Children's Cancer Ass.	£16.00
11th Nov	Boys' Brigade	£30.30

News from Rosemary

Rosemary is the nurse from Uganda St Andrew's has supported for many years

I just want you to know that God has answered your prayers. Finally my retirement package reached my bank account earlier this week! Amazing grace how sweet that was, I had almost given up on it, but there was someone who never gives up on things that concern me, and that someone is my Father in Heaven! He's just great and His faithfulness endures forever. It is difficult to understand his whole purpose but He works in a mysterious way and at His own pace. My patience was tested and found wanting but He has showed me what is good and how greater He is than my fears, questions, doubts and impatience! Isn't He wonderful and marvelous in all His ways? Well I knew you were praying this, now join me in hallelujahs to the God whose promises never fail. I haven't been so well physically, but I am strong in the Lord. He sustains me through my suffering and brightens each day with His love and sufficient grace to endure anything that comes my way. Praise His holy name... I hope to go home for the festive season next month God willing for our usual family get together celebrations. Convey my warmest greetings to my brothers and sisters in Christ at St Andrew's URC, Thank you for always supporting me spiritually, socially and materially all the time.

Rosemary

Preachers

	Marton 10.00am	Guisborough 10.00am	Redcar 11.00am
2-Dec	Jan Harper Church Meeting	Margaret Harris Communion	Martin Briton ,
9-Dec	MartonWT Parade & Toy Serv	Donna Moore	Ken Harris
16-Dec	Ken Harris Communion	Margaret Harris	Norma Johnson
23-Dec	Margaret Harris	Ken Harris	Norma Johnson
Christmas Day	Margaret and Ken Harris 10.00am Service at Guisborough		
30-Dec	Jan Harper	Donna Moore	Julie Martin
6-Jan	Margaret Harris	Guis Folk Communion	Ken Harris Communion
13-Jan	Norma Johnson Parade	Ken Harris	Jan Harper
20-Jan	Jan Harper	Norma Johnson	Covenant Serv United at St Peter's
27-Jan	Jane Rowell	Margaret Harris	Ken Harris

Material for the February Magazine to church editors by Sunday
13th January 2019 please

Group Editor – R Wheeler, 2C Gypsy Lane, Nunthorpe,

Middlesbrough, TS7 0DX.

Telephone: 01642 300546.

Email: roger.wheeler5@virginmedia.com